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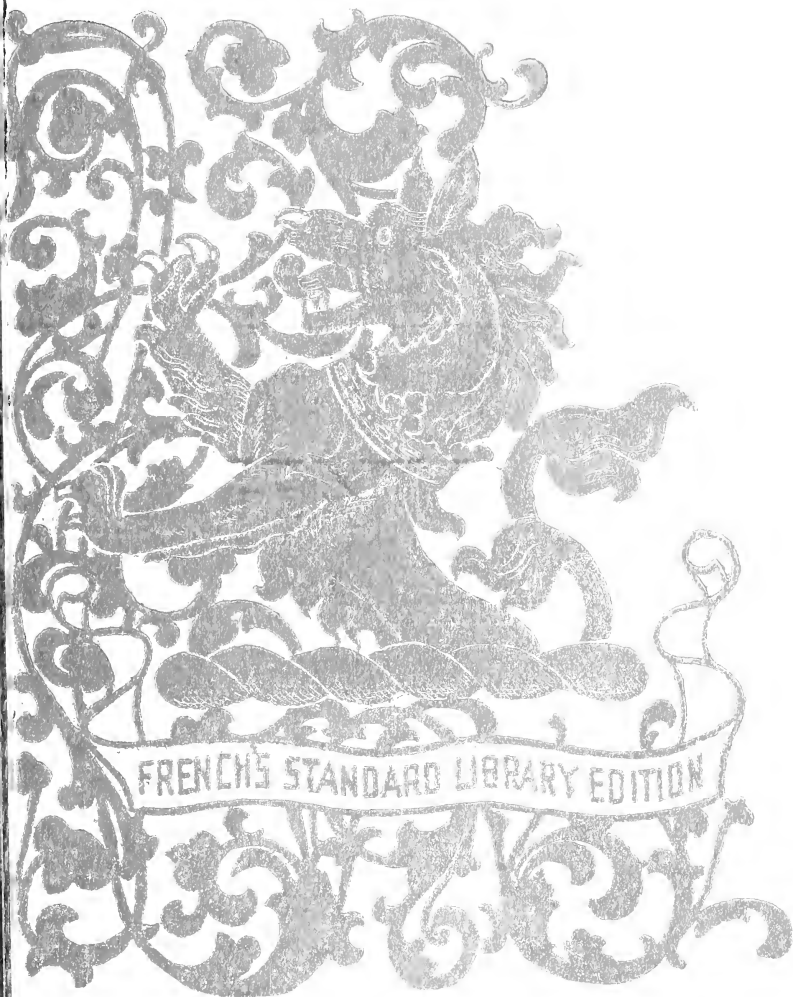
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1904

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GENIUS

and CECIL B. de MILLE



SAMUEL FRENCH, 25-30 West 38th St., New York

THE REJUVENATION OF AUNT MARY.

The famous comedy in three acts, by Anne Warner. 7 males, 6 females. Three interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

This is a genuinely funny comedy with splendid parts for "Aunt Mary," "Jack," her lively nephew; "Lucinda," a New England ancient maid of all work; "Jack's" three chums; the Girl "Jack" loves; "Joshua," Aunt Mary's hired man, etc.

"Aunt Mary" was played by May Robson in New York and on tour for over two years, and it is sure to be a big success wherever produced. We strongly recommend it. Price, 60 Cents.

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Mr. Smith chose for his initial comedy the complications arising from the endeavors of a social climber to land herself in the altitude peopled by hyphenated names—a theme permitting innumerable complications, according to the spirit of the writer.

This most successful comedy was toured for several seasons by Mrs. Fiske with enormous success. Price, 60 Cents.

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A most successful farce in three acts, by Frank Wyatt and William Morris. 5 males, 4 females. One interior scene stands throughout the three acts. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

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A comedy in four acts, by Marie Doran, author of "Tempest and Sunshine," etc. Characters, 4 males, 7 females, though any number of boys and girls can be introduced in the action of the play. One interior and one exterior scene, but can be easily played in one interior scene. Costumes modern. Time, about 2 hours.

The theme of this play is the coming of a new student to the college, her reception by the scholars, her trials and final triumph.

There are three especially good girls' parts, Letty, Madge and Estelle, but the others have plenty to do. "Punch" Doolittle and George Washington Watts, a gentleman of color, are two particularly good comedy characters. We can strongly recommend "The New Co-Ed" to high schools and amateurs. Price, 30 Cents.

(The Above Are Subject to Royalty When Produced)

SAMUEL FRENCH, 28-30 West 38th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

THE GENIUS

A Comedy in Three Acts

By

WILLIAM C. and CECIL B. de MILLE

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Act of March 4, 1909.

THE GENIUS

CHARACTERS

- JACK SPENCER - - - - - *A Man.*
VICTOR LEMERCIER - - - - - *A Painter.*
OTTO VOGELSBURGER - - - - - *A Musician.*
BRIAN MCGONIGAL - - - - - *A Sculptor.*
PERCIVAL CLUTTERBUCK - *A Connoisseur.*
CYRIL FARQUHAR - - - - - *A Would-be Artist.*
CYRUS JENKINS - - - - - *A Business man.*
NELL GRAHAM - - - - - *A Model.*
JOSEPHINE VAN DUSEN - *A Dilettante.*
LILLY SCOTT - - - - - *A School Girl.*
MRS. VAN DUSEN - - - - - *A Mother.*
MISS TREVOR - - - - - *A Society Girl.*
MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE *A Lady.*

PLACE:-*New York City.*

TIME:-*The Present.*

THE GENIUS

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I:-

Studio of the three artists on Washington Square.

ACT II:-

Studio of the Genius on Fifth Avenue.
Two weeks later.

ACT III:-

An Art Exhibition room. One week later.

THE GENIUS

SCENE:-*Studio of OTTO, VICTOR and BRIAN on Washington Square South. A dingy, bare-looking room. Windows back R. C. and L. C. Door to bedroom R. 3 E. Door to hall L. I. E. Stove R. I. E. Platform made of dry goods boxes at back between windows. Plain table down R. C., with three dilapidated carved oak chairs. Piano in upper left hand corner. Piano stool in front of it. R. C. Easel with unfinished picture of Cleopatra. Stool in front of easel and stand left of it on which are brushes, palettes, etc. Revolving sculpture stand L. C., with unfinished figure of Cleopatra in clay. Left of this a small stand with sculptor's tools and modelling clay.*

In front of L. C. windows a box on which are musical manuscripts and two or three bound scores. R. of R. C. window a box on which are plates, cups, saucers, sauce pans, etc. Unframed pictures are hung on the wall wherever possible. One or two pieces of ragged but artistic drapery over windows. A bust in plaster on piano. Large cast of human arm on wall. View through window shows Park and Washington Arch. Shade drawn over window R. C. but up on the other. Floor of room unpainted with a couple of worn-out rugs. Plaster casts about room.

DISCOVERED:—*At rise empty stage. A moment's pause then OTTO enters from R. 3 E. He is a large, portly German about forty years old. He wears his hair fairly long, and has a jolly, good-natured face. He is dressed in old trousers and flowing tie and has on an old long red dressing gown. He speaks with a strong accent. He yawns as he comes in, and crosses to window R. C.*

OTTO. (*Looking out of window*) So! Vonce more der sun. (*Crosses to box up R. and takes a tin cake box; out of it takes a coffee box which he opens, looks into and holds upside down and shakes.*) Ve haf squeezeed it dry. (*Takes out tea box and does same business.*) Null und void—(*Takes out Uneeda wrapper and peers into its depth.*) Empty is der cradle—(*Putting it down.*) So much for der larder—now for der treasury—(*Comes down to R., side of table and sits emptying his pockets. He takes out an assortment of small things and lays them on the table. While he is doing this VICTOR enters R. 3 E. He is a thin, nervous Frenchman, and is dressed in faded trousers, a negligee shirt, no tie, and a dilapidated velvet jacket. He crosses to window and looks out. He speaks with a French accent, and, at present in very mournful tone.*)

VICTOR. (*Looking out of window.*) Ah, Otto, haf you seen ze Sun?

OTTO. (*Still searching his pockets.*) Ja.

(Victor crosses to box up R., examines the empty boxes which OTTO has left open, picks one up and shakes it; then comes down L. of table emptying his pockets. OTTO has found a pipe and some tobacco. He fills the pipe and begins to smoke while VICTOR is emptying his pockets, and during this, BRIAN enters from door R. E. He goes at once to the empty tins, examines them and then turns, comes down behind table, starting to empty his pockets; he is dressed in old trousers, shirt and vest, wears a linen collar and has his sleeves rolled up—he does not wear a coat—he is a young Irishman, a gentleman, and speaks with a slight accent, but not a regular brogue. As he starts to sit the others stop him.)

OTTO. Wait, Brian, you didn't look at der sun.

BRIAN. And what's the use of looking at the sun? You can't eat it.

VICTOR. *(Dolefully)* He is all we have in ze house.

BRIAN. I say, Otto, you had three dollars yesterday.

OTTO. Ja, my sohn, but I had to pay der piano rent.

VICTOR. And so we have a piano for breakfast.

BRIAN. *(Turning to clay stand and removing covering on figure.)* I'd rather have coffee and rolls.

OTTO. But I must haf my piano; I am not yet such a genius dot I can compose a Sonata on der

window sill.

VICTOR. In short, my friends, we are again, as zay say in zis country, "up against him."

OTTO. Ve haf been "up against him" so long I should think he'd be tired.

BRIAN. (*At stand.*) Well, cheer up, boys. Luck's got to turn soon.

OTTO. Dot is all a mistake; der only kind of luck dot is sure to turn, is good luck.

VICTOR. He is right. Brian, we have come to ze end.

BRIAN. (*Back of table*) Oh, buck up, boys, the darkest hour comes just before the dawn.

OTTO. Vell, I guess dis is one of dose Arctic nights vich last six months.

BRIAN. (*Crosses to piano*) There must be something we can sell. (*Looks and point over at music on piano*)

OTTO. You needn't look at dot Wagner, because I simply won't do it. (BRIAN *crosses c.*) I sold der Italian composers, und der French composers, und Schubert, und Chopin—but I von't sell dot Wagner until—until dinner time, anyhow.

BRIAN. (*c. pointing to picture on wall R.*) Well there's that "Summer" of yours, VICTOR, the dealer offered you five dollars for it.

VICTOR. (*Starting to his feet*) Ah, sacre bleu! Five dollars for ze masterpiece of my life—non, I will starve; I will die wiz my arms around ze picture — five dollars! (*Stands looking at picture R. crosses R.*)

OTTO. (BRIAN *goes to easel*) Also! Don't get excited! It improves der appetite. Now—

(*Pointing to cast of arm on well*) Dot Angelo cast of yours, BRIAN—

BRIAN. (*Comes center*) I say, we discussed that before. I brought it all the way from Florence, and I'm not going to sell it for a meal—that goes—(*Snapping his fingers*) like that!

OTTO. Ja—but, it's such a comfort vile it's going.

BRIAN. Will you toss up and see which of the three things goes?

VICTOR. NON, I will starve! (*Sits — back of table*)

OTTO. I vill not for two reasons; firstly, I von't put der immortal Wagner on der flip of a coin; second, ve haf no coin to flip.

BRIAN. Then I guess we'll cut breakfast, and wait for something to turn up. (*Sits*)

OTTO. (*Striking light for his pipe*) Der first thing dot turns up vill be our toes.

BRIAN. Well, come on, boys, let's get to work and forget ourselves. (*Starts modeling. All three up and start working*)

OTTO. (*Crossing to piano*) I am going to compose a symphony to hunger.

VICTOR. It is almost time for Nell to come.

BRIAN. By jingo! I forgot Nell. (*VICTOR crosses at back of easel*) I say, how can we pay her for posing?

OTTO. (*At Piano*) Don't get excited, der is a von dollar bill in my hat band.

BRIAN. In your hat band?

OTTO. Ja. I vos afraid I might forget it vas Nell's salary.

BRIAN. She mustn't know how hard up we are,

if she did, she wouldn't take a cent from us, and it's about all she has to live on.

VICTOR. (*Up R. c. and down c. Going over and bringing plates etc. to easel.*) Ah! she will not know. I will paint ze remains of food on ze plates.

BRIAN. (*Crosses to VICTOR*) Victor, my boy, you're a bit emotional, but at times you're a positive genius.

VICTOR. (*To work painting plates*) Perhaps, but zere is no money in being a genius.

BRIAN. (*Back to clay*) That's true enough; to be successful here one must be fashionable.

OTTO. (*At piano writing music*) Ja. If we could get dot Percival Clutterbuck to make a few nice speeches about us, it would be easy.

BRIAN. (R. c.) Percival Clutterbuck! Why, he doesn't know the difference between a Michael Angelo and a Michael Flaherty.

VICTOR. (L. c. *Sarcastically*) Ah, but he is a connoisseur. What he praises ze people buy.

BRIAN. Well, I hope he praises this stuff of ours. (*To OTTO*) He is coming this morning to look at it.

VICTOR. "This morning"?

OTTO. Don't be alarmed, he von't like it—it's too good.

BRIAN. Cheerful thought, eh, Victor?

VICTOR. It is true. I would have sold zat "Summer" — (*Points to picture R.*) for a thousand dollaire, if he had not said it was bad.

OTTO. Say, children, ve von't talk about him, it makes me so mad. I can't compose anything but discords.

VICTOR. Ah, here! (*Crosses c. showing plates*)
We have been enjoying bacon and eggs.

BRIAN. By Jove! Victor, they're great. I feel
as if I had been eating them! (*VICTOR crosses to
table*)

OTTO. So much for imagination — I don't.

VICTOR. (*To easel*) Otto, you haf no romance
in your soul, you miss ze finest part of your life.

OTTO. I miss my breakfast, all der art in der
worlds cannot take der place of von little mutton
chop.

BRIAN. (*At stand*) OTTO, ye're no idealist—

OTTO. My sohn, Idealism has its boundaries, und
breakfast is outside der limit. Ideals belong in der
head. Der digestive apparatus rejects dem with
scorns, und means—"Ve cry for chops,—und you
give us ideals." (*Outside a whistle in heard. Sieg-
fried's call. All men sigh*)

VICTOR. Ah—It is NELL. (*OTTO answers
whistle*)

BRIAN. (*VICTOR and BRIAN stand C.*) Now
look as happy as you can. (*The halldoor is opened
and NELL enters. She has on a long ulster-like
garment which covers her dress underneath. She
has a paper package in her hand which she lays on
stool c.*)

NELL. Hello, everybody. (*Kisses OTTO*) You
boys are up early this morning. (*Crosses to c.
VICTOR and BRIAN look uneasy*) How long have
you been through breakfast?

OTTO (*L. c.*) Since half past eight o'clock—
(*Aside*) — yesterday.

NELL. (*c. noticing dishes*) Ah, but the dishes

haven't been washed— (*Tucking up her sleeves*)
Well, I'll do them for you. (*The three men look—
stop her*)

OTTO. No—not now, let dem wait.

NELL. No, indeed. Haven't I brought you up
better than that? (*Starts for the dishes. They
again stop her*)

OTTO. Vait—don't touch them.

NELL. Why what on earth is the matter?

OTTO. Vy—you see, ve are just thinking of our
inspirations—und don't vant to talk about dishes.

NELL. Ho—ho—tell that to the papers and not
to me. (*She starts to cross to the plates amid wild
glances from the three men. To OTTO*) I know
what it is. You've been eating something that I've
forbidden. (*She sees the plates and takes one up.
Looks reproachfully at each of the three men who
cannot meet her eye. VICTOR posing stand*)

OTTO. (*Sits on piano stool*) Ja. You see—
Victor and Brian, dot is, some von told dem—dot
oil paint—had a peculiar flavor—und—

NELL. (*Shaking her head*) Oh, boys, boys,
why didn't you tell me before?

BRIAN. Tell ye what, Nell?

NELL. That you were down to your last cent.

BRIAN. (*Crosses up to posing stand*) No, we're
not. Here's Otto now, has so much money his
pockets won't hold it. He has to keep it in his hat.
(*He takes OTTO's hat from piano and extracts a
dollar bill from hat-band. Half holds money to
NELL then joins VICTOR*)

NELL. (R. c.) And you've been giving me
money every week—

VICTOR. But it was economy, any other model would haf cost twice as much.

NELL. (*Crossing to OTTO*) And I'm very angry with you.

OTTO. (*BRIAN crosses to sculpture*) I don't see vy?

NELL. Why! Because you haven't treated me fairly. You give me my share of all the good things, and I want my share of the troubles, too.

OTTO. But trouble is peculiar, because der more you give to other people—der more you've got yourself.

NELL. You promised my father that I should be like your own daughter, and yet the minute things go wrong you don't tell me a word about it.

OTTO. Nell, ven I first came to America und vas really hard up, your father had nothing himself but he gave me half of it, and afterwards he gave me der best gift of all; der little girl who has made sunshine in der life of three poor devils who are happy as long as she is happy—

NELL. And the only way you can make her happy, is not to keep things from her.

BRIAN. Sure Nell, we don't keep things from you. If it weren't for you there wouldnt' be a button on any of us, but what's the use of worryin' you with business and money and all that?

NELL. (*Crossing to Painter's stool—gets pie*) Well, I'm going to heap coals of fire on your head; what do you suppose I've got for you? (*Taking up paper parcel—to c.*)

BRIAN. A sofa pillow — (*NELL shakes her head*)

VICTOR. A lace centre-piece — (*NELL laughs—*

goes down L.)

OTTO. Vait—I bet it's a pair of slippers for dear old man—

NELL. No, better than that. A pie!

VICTOR & BRIAN. "A pie?"

OTTO. Ach Gott! (*The three men come down eagerly*)

NELL. I made it for you myself — (*Gives pie to OTTO. Crosses L.*)

OTTO. (*BRIAN and VICTOR rush for pie*) A pie! (*Holding the pie*) Hold on! Von at a time! (*OTTO to table. BRIAN to stool for compass. VICTOR to easel for rule. They bring out compasses, measure and divide the pie on table R.*) Look out! A little more dis vay—too much, etc. (*To NELL*) You will haf some, Nell?

NELL. (*Laughing*) No thank you. My doctor has sat down on pie. (*The three men eat with signs of delight*)

BRIAN. Nell, you're the queen of cooks.

VICTOR. Mais oui — (*Holding up piece of pie*) I eat your health.

OTTO. (*Eating*) Dot pie is a symphonic poem—

NELL. Oh! What did the publishers say about the Sonata?

OTTO. Dey vare very kind in pointing out *der defects*. It seems. *der* first part is too much like Grieg; *der* middle suggests Richard Strauss, und *der* last movement is taken almost entirely from Wagner.

NELL. But it isn't at all. (*On easel stool*)

OTTO. I have been apologizing to dose three masters ever since.

BRIAN. I say, OTTO, why don't ye do something popular as a pot boiler?

OTTO. It's no use. I tried to—I started to compose a rag-time song called "My Moonfaced Baby," but after der first few bars, I said: No! If I must die—I vant an easier death. Ach Gott! Der dreams I had—

VICTOR. Ah! Some day we will get even wiz ze public.

NELL. Don't blame the public. It's not their fault, poor dears. They're ready to like your work if the experts would let them.

BRIAN. Don't say that, Nell. If you once admit the public has any taste, what becomes of the hundreds of bad artists, whose one excuse is that their work is too artistic to be popular?

OTTO. Hold on! I object. (*Rise*) Der conversation is getting too near home to be enjoyable. Let's get to work— (NELL *Crosses* U. C. OTTO *crosses to piano*. VICTOR *to easel*)

BRIAN. All right. Come on, Nell. (*To modeling stand*. *To NELL*.) Lend us your head —

NELL. Are you ready for me?

VICTOR. Please. (NELL *goes to platform, removes her ulster, and appears in costume of Cleopatra*. *During the next scene she poses for the two men*)

NELL. Who's first?

VICTOR and BRIAN. Mine, please. (*They look at each other*)

VICTOR. Oh, all right, after you, my dear Brian.

BRIAN. Thank you, my dear Victor. (*Outside an automobile is heard to come up*)

AUTO HORN L.

VICTOR. (*Up to window L. c. Putting up shade of window*) I say, zere is an automobile in front of zis house.

OTTO. (*At piano*) It's not mine.

VICTOR. (*At window*) Zere is a man coming in here.

BRIAN. Is it Clutterbuck?

VICTOR. Non.

OTTO. Ach Gott! Maybe it's a patron. Come boys, get busy. (*The three men start to work, footsteps are heard outside, then a knock at the door. VICTOR starts to open it. OTTO stops him. OTTO, in a whisper*) Hold on! Let him knock again. (*The three men at work. The knock is repeated*) Come in. (*The door opens and Jack Spencer enters. Young, healthy American type, dressed in a long automobile coat*)

JACK. Good morning, gentlemen.

THREE ARTISTS. Good morning.

JACK. I'm looking for some artists. I saw your cards outside and thought I'd consult you.

OTTO. So? Vot is der name of der artists?

JACK. Oh, I'm not particular—you are artists, aren't you? (*To c.*)

OTTO. We are trying to convince der public of it.

JACK. Well, do you ever take pupils?

VICTOR. (*Rising from easel*) Sure. (*OTTO pulls him down into stand*)

OTTO. (*Frowns at him and puts on air of indifference*) Oh, ve sometimes take a pupil, dot is, if he tinks he has promise. (*VICTOR comes down*)

and sits left)

JACK. Well, if you'll take me, I'll promise anything. (BRIAN comes D.)

OTTO. So you want to study Art?

JACK. (C.) Yes.

OTTO. (To JACK) Also! Vat branch? Painting, sculpture, music?

JACK. What is the cheapest? Oh, it doesn't matter to me—I'll study whichever I can learn quickest. The point is, that I have got to have some art, and I've got to have it P. D. Q. (VICTOR rises. BRIAN down D. C. *The three artists look at one another*)

OTTO. But, my dear sir, although art is supposed to be feminine, she cannot be wooed and won in a week.

JACK. Well, I don't know anything about it, but I thought that if I worked hard, I might pick up enough in a month to get along with.

OTTO. Von month! Du lieber Gott! Do you know what Art is?

JACK. No. That's just what I'm here to learn.

OTTO. But vy are you in such a hurry?

JACK. Well, it's rather a long story, but I guess if you'll hear it, I'd better confide in you.

OTTO. Sure, ve'll hear it. Ven a man wants to learn Art in von month, he must have a story worth listening to.

JACK. By-the-way, I forgot to introduce myself. My name is Spencer—Jack Spencer.

OTTO. Happy to meet you. Mine is Vogelsburger. (Shake hands) Dis is Mr. McGonigal, Mr. Le Mercier und our ward Miss Graham. (*The*

two men bow. JACK offers to shake hands)

BRIAN. Look out! I've been making mud pies.
(*JACK shakes his wrist. BRIAN to chair L. of table.*)

VICTOR *crosses to JACK)*

VICTOR. It is a great honaire.

NELL. Shall I be in the way?

JACK. Not on your life. I should like to have you stay, if you don't mind. You see my case is one where a feminine mind might be useful—

OTTO. Besides, Miss Graham is a full partner in all we do—so now for der story. (*JACK crosses to sculptor's stool, NELL to posing stand, VICTOR brings piano stool down L. OTTO brings painter's stool L. c.)*

JACK. (*Offering cigars*) You don't mind, Miss Graham? (*She shakes her head. To men*) Then try one of these — (*To OTTO and VICTOR*) — they're not bad. (*JACK, VICTOR and OTTO light cigar*)

VICTOR. (*Aside to OTTO —showing cigar*) Save ze band.

JACK. Will you have one too?

BRIAN. Thanks.

JACK. I didn't catch your name?

BRIAN. McGonigal.

JACK. That's a good old Irish name, isn't it?

BRIAN. It is that.

JACK. (*Taking off coat*) Can I trouble you, Mr. McGonigal?

BRIAN. No trouble. (*Takes coat and gloves*)

JACK. Well, of course, there's a girl at the bottom of the whole business.

OTTO. (*All sit*) Sure!

JACK. And this girl's a rattler, intellectual, brainy, and all that sort of thing, but a fine girl in spite of it. Now, I'm not much on the sentimental, but I haven't thought of anything but that girl for a—month. You see, when a chap's fixed the way I am—nothing to keep him busy—lots of cash, and no people of his own, there's only one thing to do.

OTTO. Ja—get some people of his own.

JACK. Just so—but now we come to the plot. This girl has got what she calls an "artistic temperament." Of course, you know what that is. (*Movement from the others*)

OTTO. (*With a sigh*) Ja, ve do.

JACK. Well, there's another chap in the game, he's sort of an amateur art critic, writes for the papers and all that; he's what is technically known as my hated rival. He's a good natured sort of an idiot, but, of course, he plays the artistic temperament gag for all it's worth. Affinity of souls and all that, and, consequently cuts lots of ice. Now, Art and temperament and affinities and all that are not my long suit. I'm an ordinary sort of chap, but I think a lot of this girl, and as she won't touch anything that hasn't got an artistic finish, I thought it was about up to me to learn some Art. So I got up early this morning, and here I am.

OTTO. I suppose everybody in der world runs up against some sort of critic. What is der name of yours?

JACK. His name is Clutterbuck!

THREE ARTISTS. (*Jumping to their feet*) What! Clutterbuck?

JACK. I said Clutterbuck. Not dynamite.

OTTO. Dot Clutterbuck, he is der man **what** queered us vit der public!

JACK. Oh, you know him?

BRIAN. Know him?

VICTOR. Mon Dieu!

OTTO. Don't say a vord; if it is Clutterbuck you're fighting against, count us in it.

BRIAN. We're with you. (NELL *on L. corner of posing stand*)

VICTOR. To ze death. (*Three men — Their chairs up close to JACK*)

JACK. Well, that's fine; now what art can I learn quickest? I don't wont it thoroughly, you know, just enough to do a little.

OTTO. But do you expect to learn an art as if it were poker?

JACK. I don't know, I never learned poker—I always knew it. Come, there must be some Art that isn't so hard.

VICTOR. If zere is, I haven't found him.

BRIAN. Nor I.

JACK. Music isn't so hard, it is? Just learning where to put your fingers? (*All move their stools a little away*)

OTTO. Ach Gott! Don't! (NELL *amused*. VICTOR *and BRIAN amused*)

JACK. Well, what am I to do then?

OTTO. Dot is der problem.

BRIAN. Nell, you're the brains of the party; what's to be done?

NELL. (*Coming down, standing with head on OTTO'S shoulder, between BRIAN and VICTOR*) You say she has refused you?

JACK. (*Rises*) Quite emphatically.

NELL. And just because you're lacking in artistic temperament?

JACK. That's the only reason she gave me!

NELL. Don't you know anything about Art?

JACK. Only that the most expensive kind is hand painted.

VICTOR. (*Springing to feet and going to easel*)
Mon Dieu!

JACK. (*Looking at VICTOR surprised, then at the others*) There must be some way out of it—some kind of "Art in twenty lessons" scheme. Art while you wait.

NELL. Does the girl herself know much about art?

JACK. You bet she does—why I can't understand half she says.

NELL. H'm! Let me think.

JACK. (*Rising*) Let her think! I would rather have her think, than you talk.

BRIAN. (*All take seats back*) While you're thinking, do you mind posing a bit more? (*BRIAN at stand. VICTOR at easel. OTTO at piano. JACK down L. C.*)

NELL. Can you sing, Mr. Spencer?

JACK. I only tried it once—the next day I moved (*NELL to posing stand—back to table*) Believe me, I've tried every way I can think of to develop some genius. (*Crosses R., sits L. of table*)

NELL. Oh—genius—will that do?

JACK. Why, yes!

ALL THREE. (*Turn*) "Oh"!

JACK. I thought a genius was a chap who could

do great things without half trying; a man who has a pull with the Muses.

VICTOR. Mon Dieu! Non! A genius is one who can please ze critics and ze connoisseurs.

BRIAN. (c. *modeling stand*) Sure. A genius is a man who pretends to be above the small things of life, so that someone eles will do them for him.

JACK. (R.) But isn't a genius a man of inspiration? (*Rises—to R. c.—front of table—leaning against it*)

OTTO. (L.) No, he is a man of perspiration. All dot inspiration I ever heard of came from hard work, from sorrow und pain. Dese chaps vat sit down und half a pipe dream und den write about it, dey are not geniuses—dey are damn fools.

JACK. But the world calls them geniuses.

NELL. (*Change the pose for BRIAN*) The world has two standards for genius; a man must either make money, or be some kind of a freak.

JACK. Well, I've got lots of money.

NELL. Did you earn it yourself?

JACK. Some of it.

NELL. How?

JACK. Good investments, coppering friendly tips, and not spending any principal, and keeping out of life insurance. But that doesn't seem to count for a hang with her.

NELL. No, that's not quite what I meant.

JACK. Then suppose I try being a freak. I can let my hair grow—act as if I never saw anyone, and learn how to sigh, and look wild-eyed. (*Walking L. back R.*)

OTTO. Dot might do it.

NELL. But you'd have to talk art, and you can't.

JACK. You three men all do things; why aren't you geniuses? Now look at him—he's wild-eyed, ain't he—

OTTO. Because ve haven't made money, und ve are not freaks. Now, if I could compose, und paint und model all at once, I'd be a genius. Even if I couldn't do as good work as we are doing now.

JACK. (*Going*) Well, then I'm very sorry that there's nothing for me to do—but—by Jingo! (*All stop work*) I've got a scheme—I see how I can become a genius. (*Come c.*)

OTTO. (L. VICTOR and BRIAN: "*You a genius*") A genius?

JACK. Yes, only I'll have to have your help.

OTTO. Also vat is der scheme? (BRIAN and VICTOR *down*. NELL *crosses c.*)

JACK. If it works, it will not only make me a genius, but it will make you rich men.

BRIAN. Sure, we've no objection to that.

JACK. You say your work isn't appreciated—

VICTOR. Non.

JACK. You need money, and I need fame, now why not make a partnership in which we divide the proceeds—you taking the cash and I the reputation.

OTTO. Vat sort of a partnership?

JACK. Why, like this—as the great American genius I'll put my name to your respective works.

BRIAN. Holy ginger—

OTTO. Our reputation—

VICTOR. Ze undying fame we work for—

JACK. Now don't get excited—You haven't any

reputation now, but as pupils of Spencer the Genius, you'd have the world at your feet.

OTTO. By damn! Dot's so.

BRIAN. Wait a bit—wait a bit. I haven't swallowed it all yet.

JACK. WHY, it's easy—I am the Genius, you are my three private pupils—and get all the proceeds. It's just a little advertising scheme to get your work before the public—

OTTO. But how will der public know—

JACK. Ah, they must know what they don't know. (*All turn away—thinking*) You see Clutterbuck—(*All turn back*) is always looking for the new and unusual. All we have to do is to let him discover us. He'll boom me for all he's worth to make his own reputation. In a few weeks my name will be a household word and Josephine will be glad to take me. Don't you see how simple it is? Why there's nothing to it.

NELL. Suppose we get found out? (*OTTO sits R. of table*)

JACK. But we can't get found out if we all stick to the agreement, and you coach me up a bit. What do you say, men?

VICTOR. (*To easel*) It will serve ze public right. I will do my share.

BRIAN. Faith! I can see opulence just lying in wait for the crowd. (*Offering wrist for JACK to shake*) Count me in.

NELL. And you, Otto?

OTTO. (*Crosses to Nell c.*) I don't want to split hairs, but don't you think der is something about der scheme that an unsympathetic world

might call cheating?

JACK. Why, you are the only ones who are cheated. The world gets the same work in any case, and what difference does it make to them whose name goes with it?

BRIAN. Sure. Otto, it's just a sort of a joke.

VICTOR. A good joke zat will make us all millionaires.

JACK. And besides, all's fair in love and war, and this is both. We don't hurt anyone and we gain everything.

BRIAN. And we get even with Clutterbuck.

OTTO. (*Rising*) Dot's so. I forget; vell, you better count me in der game. (*To Piano*)

JACK. Good work! Well then here's a hundred to bind the bargain—(*All "hundred"*) Then our motto is, "E pluribus unum."

NELL. Yes, United we stand—

JACK. And divided—Oh, Lord! say—of course, you men mustn't get tired of this arrangement. (*Men down*) If you go back on me, I'm caught with the goods.

NELL. They mustn't. We must have an oath of secrecy and allegiance.

JACK. That's the stuff.

BRIAN. Sure, the scheme's gettin' into me blood. I'll swear to anything.

JACK. Well then, conspirators! Come hither! (*Men draw together. Solemnly*) You swear never to go back on me, and I'll swear never to go back on you, and we'll both swear never—(*All swear never to go back on each other*)—unless we all agree. Do you swear?

THREE MEN. (*Holding up their right hands*)
I do.

JACK. (*Holding up his right hand*) And so do I.

NELL. (*At window. Quickly*) Here comes Mr. Clutterbuck and two ladies. (*All back to work*)

JACK. (*Rushing up to window*) Why! It's Josephine and her Mother. (*OTTO down R. BRIAN to stand*)

OTTO. Vat are dey coming for?

JACK. (*Coming down c.*) I remember now. Clutterbuck said he'd bring them down here to show them how romantically artists live.

OTTO. Dot damn Clutterbuck! Does he tink ve are vild animals on exhibition?

BRIAN. I wonder how they'd like it if we introduced ourselves in their homes to see how the four hundred live.

VICTOR. (*Shrugging his shoulders*) Zey do not know any better.

JACK. (*On posing stand*) Besides, Mrs. Van Dusen is great on Art. (*To c.*)

NELL. (*At window*) They're coming in.

JACK. (*Crosses R. c.*) Well, get me out of the way. I mustn't be found too soon.

NELL. Does anyone know you're down here?

JACK. No.

NELL. (*Down to JACK*) Then this is your chance to be discovered at work.

JACK. But great Scott! I don't know my part; I'll make a mess of it if I try it so soon—give me a little more time. You see I expected a few days

to get ready.

NELL. (c. *excited*) You'll never again have so good an opportunity.

BRIAN. (*Excited*) All right! the game's on. Fix me up in some of your things, boys.

NELL. Quick! boys — some clothes! (*The artists rush off R. C. getting clothes for JACK. They get him rigged up in a non-descript sort of way, part painter, part sculptor and part musician. VICTOR removes coat from wall down R. and gives JACK velvet jacket he is wearing*)

JACK. (*Taking off coat*) Any old thing will do; they must be nearly here. Watch the door someone — (NELL *to door*) Say, how do I get into this thing? (*Putting on modeler's tunic*) Oh, I thought it was a skirt. Here's something — (*Putting on Turkish fez from VICTOR*) By Jingo! If they don't think I'm a genius, it's not the fault of the clothes. Say, tell me some artistic terms.

OTTO. Pizzicato.

VICTOR. Tone color.

BRIAN. Foreshortened.

OTTO. Andante.

VICTOR. Background.

BRIAN. Perspective.

OTTO. Con amore.

VICTOR. Treatment.

BRIAN. Finish.

JACK. Hold on, you win, that's enough. I can't learn the whole Bohemian language in five minutes.

NELL. (*At door*) They're on the next landing— Hurry up—

JACK. Great Scott! I'm getting stage fright.

(*Up c. three men bring him back*) (*By the tail of tunic*) I know I'll get all balled up.

NELL. (*At door*) Just put on a bold front and fake it through. Are you ready?

JACK. (*Each to his work*) All right, here she goes; get busy then. (*Repeats to himself terms the three men have been telling him. The three men start working, each at his own art. JACK turns his hand through his hair. NELL to posing stand. JACK puts on a wild look. NELL takes her place to pose. OTTO is making a noise on the piano. knock is heard. JACK calls*) Come in. (*Door opens admitting Percival, Josephine and Mrs. Van Dusen. Percival is rather an effeminate type, and Josephine affects the ultra-artistic. They stand in astonishment, looking at the scene. JACK is careful not to look at them, and rushes around from one artist to another running his hands through his hair. Looking alternately dreamy and frenzied*)

JACK. (*At piano*) That's better, Otto, that's better, but take out that pizzicato and play it more con amore. (*Over to BRIAN*) Look out! My dear boy, that dimple is too much foreshortened! And put that chin more on the bias. (*Arranges NELL in awkward attitude. Over to VICTOR*) Not bad, not bad! your tone color is better, but you lack finish. A softer treatment you see— (*Making wild passes in front of the picture*) Like this—softer, softer—just a touch of light here.

JOSEPHINE. Why, its Jack Spencer!

CLUTTERBUCK. Impossible!

MRS. VAN DUSEL. Mr. Spencer would scarcely be giving directions to artists. (*OTTO strikes*

chords)

JACK. Ha! Otto, what was that last chord you played?

OTTO. A diminished seventh, master.

JACK. Yes, that's not right; take off about two sixteenths more. (*VICTOR and BRIAN conceal laughter. JACK rushes toward BRIAN. PERCIVAL at centre*)

PERCIVAL. I beg your pardon. I — (*JACK faces him, and stops transfixed with amazement*) It is Jack Spencer. (*JACK to c.*)

JACK. (*Pretends to start*) Discovered, by Heaven!—After all these years! (*Turning fiercely to the artists up c.*) Boys, boys, why didn't you warn me?

BRIAN. Pardon, master, pardon

MRS. VAN DUSEN. Mr. Spencer, what is the meaning of all this?

JOSEPHINE. You told me you knew nothing of Art. (*Crosses to JACK*)

JACK. (*Sorrowfully. Down to c. to her*) Yes, that is the one lie of my life, but I had a motive for it.

JOSEPHINE. Yes?

JACK. Since you have discovered my secret, I may as well tell you all. I take no credit for what I am; it was a law of nature that I should be gifted far beyond the lot of the common herd — but at heart I am a mere man, and I knew the world; I knew that if any should know me for what I am, I would be lionized, feted, worshipped — that I could never be sure of a friend. Affection for the man would be lost in admiration for the genius, so

I dissembled. I pretended to be no more than the ordinary variety of man. Ah, Josephine, when you rejected plain Jack Spencer you did not know that you were losing the greatest artist of the century—the all around, long distance champion of Art! But I don't want to talk of myself. These three boys are my pupils — (*They rise and bow*) — and they can tell you better than I can what I am—(*Turns aside and makes signals to the others*) — which my natural modesty forbids — that's going some.

PERCIVAL. (*To OTTO*) Is this true?

MRS. VAN DUSEN. Wonderful!

OTTO. Let his work speak for him. (*Pointing to picture on wall R.*) There is his latest painting. (MRS. VAN DUSEN. PERCY and JOSEPHINE all rush R. to picture. Artists applaud JACK)

PERCIVAL. (*Crosses to painting*) But it's signed Victor Le Mercier.

JACK. Yes, but now concealment is useless. After this I shall sign all the work myself.

JOSEPHINE. (*Crossing to JACK*) Oh, Jack, why didn't you tell me? I can see the artistic temperament — (JACK — *looking around "where?"*) — in your eyes.

JACK. (*Pretending to control his grief*) There, Josephine, I do not blame you. If you could not care for the man — the artist would soon pall, but what is done, is done. (*Turns away in grief*)

PERCIVAL. (*At picture R. JOSEPHINE back to picture R. C.*) But this is wonderful! The treatment has all the fine points of Rembrandt! (VICTOR in ecstasy — *back to easel at picture R.*)

MRS. VAN DUSEN. The tones remind me strongly

of Rubens.

JACK. Yes, it is a cadenza after Turner. Oh, it's only a short study; it's quite unfinished.

PERCIVAL. (*To JACK c.*) But such work belongs to the world. It is wrong to conceal it. Let me show the American public that a great artist is living in their midst. (*Crosses to R. JOSEPHINE*)

JACK. As you will; it is all the same to me now. (*Crosses L.*)

MRS. VAN DUSEN. (*Crosses L.*) Mr. Spencer, I'm afraid we've misjudged you. If you permit me, I'll make arrangements for a reception to you at my house. (*Crosses c. to OTTO. JACK bows*)

PERCIVAL. (*To c. Rushing over and taking JACK'S hand*) My dear fellow, if I had only known!

JACK. Yes, yes — but don't disturb me now — this is my busy day.

PERCIVAL. Well, I'll see you this afternoon. We must get this in the papers before anyone else gets ahead of us. (*Crosses L.*)

JACK. Yes, yes — but no fuss, please. I hate a fuss — Besides you're disturbing my atmosphere.

MRS. VAN DUSEN. We won't disturb you any longer. You'll dine with us tonight — quite informally.

JACK. (*Absent mindedly*) Er — Er — thank you, thank you, I shall be delighted.

MRS. VAN DUSEN. Come, Josephine.

JACK. Oh Josephine, discovered, and after all these years!

JOSEPHINE. (*Crosses L. Aside to him*) You'll be sure to come, Jack; seven o'clock.

JACK. If my work prevents, I'll send word.

(Looks at him wistfully, and joins her mother)

PERCIVAL. *Good bye.* (JACK *removes fez; they start to go*) By Jove! I've discovered the great American Genius.

MRS. VAN DUSEN. We both discovered him, Mr. Clutterbuck.

JOSEPHINE. Ah — but I felt it all the time.

JACK. Let's see, Otto — where were we? Oh, yes, two sixteenths and a diminished eight. *(Turning toward OTTO stops at sight of VICTOR. Suddenly catching sight of Victor's work)* No, no, my dear boy, you have no perspective in your conception; you need more *andante* — see here — *(Grabs brush and palette from him and makes a few wild strokes across the picture)* More like this —

VICTOR. *(Screaming)* Ah — look out, look out!

JACK. *(Backing him, c. By this time PERCY, JOSEPHINE and MRS. VAN DUSEN have gone out, looking very much impressed and talking excitedly to each other. As the door closes)* Never mind, old man, I've ruined your picture — but I'm a genius! *(Crosses center — laughing wildly)*

-:- CURTAIN -:-

ACT II

TIME.—*Two weeks later. Afternoon*

SCENE:—*Studio of the Genius on Fifth Avenue.*

A luxurious room of the fashionable artist type. Door to hall L. 3. E. Large bay windows with rich curtains back c. Platform for posing R. of windows. Piano and stool L. of windows. Stand of armour L. of platform. Large screen R. of platform — stand of armour between screen and R. 2. E. Couch down R. Divan L. Table and two chairs down L. c. Handsome modeling stand and tools R. c. Easel, stool and stand with painters' implements L. c. Music-stand with music L. of piano. Everything is in direct contrast to Act I. Paintings, weapons and many useless but ornamental things adorn the wall.

DISCOVERED:—*Curtain discovers OTTO, VICTOR and BRIAN. OTTO on couch R. c. with newspaper and shears. VICTOR at table with two large scrap books, is pasting in notices which the other two cut out and hand to him. All three men are stylishly dressed and have a general atmosphere of well-fed opulence.*

OTTO is smoking a large German pipe. VICTOR and BRIAN both have cigars.

OTTO. Ach Gott! — boys, listen to dis von —
(Reads) "Clutterbuck on Spencer, the distinguished critic explains the novel methods of the Genius! Mr. Percival Clutterbuck, whose recent discovery of the wonderful young man, has been the talk of the town for the past two weeks, explained yester-

day to our reporter the facts connected with his discovery. It appears that Mr. Clutterbuck has known the young painter; sculptor; musician for years, but has been keeping the knowledge secret, in order that he might the better guide and direct the talents of the wonderful young man. (VICTOR *crosses R.*) The invaluable help that Mr. Clutterbuck must have given the Genius is apparent, when we consider that not one of our critics has found a single fault with his work. (*To the others*) Now, wouldn't dot make you smile? (*Cuts out notices and gives to VICTOR with notices already cut out, he crosses L. of table*)

VICTOR. Non, it is more to weep.

BRIAN. Sure, there's no suitin' some people (*To VICTOR*) Here ye are rolling' in the lap of luxury, smokin' Havana cigars and with two fat bank accounts, yet ye wear a face like the divil on Ash Wednesday.

VICTOR. I haf sold my honaire.

BRIAN. And you've sold it for more than it's worth. (*Goes c.*)

VICTOR. (*Rising*) Brian, you insult my honaire—

OTTO. Now, don't get peevish. I see vat he means.

BRIAN. Don't ye see we're just following the business tendency of the times —

VICTOR. (*Subsiding*) Vat do you mean?

BRIAN. We've just formed a little company, that's all. Now suppose we had formed the company to make scissors and knives and razors, and called ourselves "The Spencer Cutlery Co."— and suppose you made the scissors, and Otto made

the knives and I made the razors. Why, then we wouldn't think it wrong to stamp the name "Spencer" on every piece of work we turned out.

VICTOR. But zat is business — zere is no honaire in business —

BRIAN. Sure, it's the same in Art, we've formed a little Art Company, that's all, and the things we make, instead of being stamped with the names of the workmen, are stamped with the name of the firm.

OTTO. By tam! Brian, Kant himself couldn't prove better dot something was nothing — here — (*Giving him notices*) Put dis in der Clutterbuck book. (*OTTO gives it to BRIAN who crosses L. to table*)

BRIAN. (*Back of table. Looking over VICTOR'S shoulder*) We've got Clutterbuck hard and fast, he can't deny that Spencer's the greatest Genius of the century, without giving himself the lie a thousand times over.

VICTOR. Zat is ze one consolation.

BRIAN. And after all, boys, we're helping a poor devil win the girl he loves. We can't help it if we become rich men while we are doing it.

VICTOR. But he is taking no steps to win ze fair Josephine — he has not been to see her for a week.

BRIAN. That's the foxiness of the boy, don't ye see he's giving his greatness a chance to sink in? (*A knock on the door L. 3. E.*)

OTTO. (R. c.) Come in. My we got an early caller, yes. (*All sit at their places*) "Come in, Come in." (*The door opens and PERCY enters*)

PERCIVAL. (*Coming c. Looking around*) Ah,

good morning, boys.

THREE ARTISTS. Good morning.

PERCIVAL. (C) Hasn't your master appeared yet?

BRIAN. (R. C.) No, not yet.

VICTOR. (L) Ze mastaire had a very busy day yesterday.

OTTO. (R. C. *coming down*) Ja, and der poor devil — (VICTOR *coughs*) I mean our dear master is finding der calls of Art almost too heavy. Ah, Mr. Clutterbuck, you should have considered well before exposing to a clamoring public a nature so delicately temperamental as that of Mr. Spencer. (*Sitting on settee*)

PERCIVAL. I had a duty to perform, and I did it, but I beg you will not call him *Mr.* Spencer. To give the common title to a character such as his sounds as strangely as would *Mr.* Angelo, or *Mr.* Rembrandt. (*Up c. a little to examine picture*)

BRIAN. But we call *you Mr.* Clutterbuck and surely the genius which appreciates the work as you do, is no less than that of him who creates that work.

PERCIVAL. (*Three artists laugh silently*) (*Very much pleased*) Possibly, possibly — but to return to the master.

OTTO. Vell, as I was saying, yesterday morning he had to be present at meetings of der American Association of Temperamental Research, und der New York Society for der Promotion of Artistic Impulses. After a hasty lunch he laid der corner stone for der new Conservatory of Painting und den rushed off to open der bazaar for der young

womans' auxillary of der National Confederation of Ethical Culture in der fine Arts. In der evening he vast given a dinner by der Philharmonic Association — und ven he finally retired he left orders not even if der house caught fire he vas not to be disturbed until der firemen vere sure they could not control der flames.

PERCIVAL. (*Taking chair L. of easel*) Well, perhaps I'd better tell you of a little scheme I have originated and you can sound the master with regard to it.

BRIAN. The master doesn't like schemes. (*Sitting on table*)

VICTOR. He says ze vord "scheme" signifies deceit, and is distasteful to him on zat account.

PERCIVAL. Ah, but my plan will benefit the public as well as him and myself.

OTTO. I never saw a scheme yet dot was not promoted for der purpose of enriching der general public.

PERCIVAL. This is what I want to do; I propose to give a course of lectures on painting, sculpture and music, and have Spencer illustrate the points as I make them. (*All three men blow a puff of smoke in the air. The three men look at one another blankly. PERCIVAL looks at each, each has something to do*)

OTTO. (*On sofa*) Vell, you see it would be all right — only —

PERCIVAL. Oh, you could persuade him, a man who turns out work as fast as he does could easily model a bust while I am explaining the fine points of sculpture.

BRIAN. Yes, but he is so shy — you know he can never work while anyone is looking at him.

PERCIVAL. He'd soon get over that, with practice.

VICTOR. I do not believe he ever will. Even I have not seen him work on one of his own paintings. He only criticises mine.

OTTO. Vy, ve had a letter yesterday from a theatrical manager who offered der master three thousand dollars a week to act a little sketch in der Vaudeville stage, in der course of vich he vas to paint a picture, model a statue and compose a symphony.

PERCIVAL. That's very much like my idea.

OTTO. Ja, but der master refused rather than make a public spectacle of his genius. It's no use, Mr. Clutterbuck, he is vone of dose rare flowers vich are born to bloom unseen. (*As he turns up he stops to sigh at the beauty of the painting*)

PERCIVAL. Well, if he won't, I suppose he won't, but it would have been a wonderful thing. The greatest artist of the country working before the eyes of the people, while the greatest critic explains his work.

BRIAN. (*Crosses to PERCIVAL shaking his head. PERCIVAL acknowledges each compliment. BRIAN turns up c. adn back down R.*) Sure, ye'd make a great team.

VICTOR. (L) You are suited to each othaire in a marvelous degree.

OTTO. (*Coming down R.*) By — der — vay, I hear you have been made a director of der Institute. Yes?

PERCIVAL. Yes, indeed. It was Providence that led me to your studio that morning.

BRIAN. It was.

PERCIVAL. I have not only made Spencer famous, but by doing so my own position has been made secure. Everyone wants my opinion. No artistic gathering is complete unless I drop in for a few minutes. In a way, I may be said to be the artistic Columbus of America.

BRIAN. (*Down c.*) Ye're going to have a remarkable finish.

PERCIVAL. I'm sure of it. Well, I won't wait any longer. There is a Directors' meeting of the Institute which I must attend. Tell Spencer I'll drop in later in the day and have a bit of a chat with him. (*Crosses L. to E.*)

OTTO. Ve will do so. Good day, Mr. Clutterbuck.

PERCIVAL. (*At door L.*) Au revoir. And if you think there is any chance for that course of lectures — let me know.

BRIAN. We'll do what we can for you.

PERCIVAL. Thank you — thank you. Good day. Good day. (*Exit L. to E.*)

OTTO. (*Up R.*) Ach Gott! — Ven he finds out.

BRIAN. (*Down to OTTO*) From the way things are going now, I don't see why he should ever find out.

VICTOR. (*Crosses to c.*) You 'can fool all ze people part of ze time, and —

BRIAN. (*To c.*) And in the case of Art, part of the time means a couple of hundred years.

OTTO. (*R. c. by 'screen*) Vell, let's hope for der

best. Ah, here comes Jack. (*The door R. 2. E. opens and JACK enters. He comes slowly c. as in a dream. JACK is dressed in ultra-artistic style, and is constantly posing, he comes in slowly posing, then assumes his natural manner*)

JACK. (*R. C. crosses and turns all around*) Oh, I thought there was somebody here.

BRIAN. No, they're all outside.

JACK. How many?

BRIAN. (*Holding up card tray — full*) How many —

OTTO. We got rid of them all but three — one woman and two men.

JACK. Anyone we know?

BRIAN. No, all strangers.

JACK. How long have they been waiting?

BRIAN. (*Looking at watch*) About one hour and a quarter.

JACK. That's good. Oh, then I'll go through the mail first. (*Sits R. of table, and BRIAN opens a large pile of letters, first placing large waste basket by chair*)

OTTO. Jack, you take to der vays of a Genius like a duck to vater. (*BRIAN opens letters and hands them to him one by one*)

JACK. (*Opening letter*) Dear Mr. Spencer, Would it be too much trouble for you to send me your auto — (*Throws it into basket*) Yes, it would. (*Opening another*) Honored Sir:-I have a very fine collection of autographs. (*VICTOR crosses and sits smoking. Throws it into basket; takes another*) Dear Mr. Spencer:- Will you send me one of your neckties for my sofa cushion. I

was introduced to you once three years ago, so take the liberty of asking your opinion of Ruskin's theories of Art — (*Looking at BRIAN*) I say, what's Ruskin's theory of Art? (*BRIAN — standing back of table*)

OTTO. Thirty-two volumes — at two fifty per volume.

JACK. (*Handing letter to BRIAN*) Well, tell him what I think about them, will you, Brian? (*Taking another*) Although I do not know you personally I take the liberty of asking for your autograph — (*Throws it into basket and takes another*) Honored Sir:- May we use your name for our baking powder — you've risen so quickly. (*Puts letter in inside pocket*) Dear Sir:- Would be obliged for your auto — (*Into basket. Takes another*) Oh, I say, boys, listen — this is from one of the big weeklies. Dear Sir:- If you will draw for us exclusively we will give you one hundred thousand dollars for one hundred drawings — (*Whistle from BRIAN*) to appear, one every week during the next two years. What do you think of that?

OTTO. Not enough, other people get dot much.

JACK. Wait — here's a P. S. (*Reads*) "In case you accept this offer kindly make your letter very legible as we would like to use it for advertising purposes."

OTTO. (*Smoking*) Tell him five thousand per drawing is der lowest price.

JACK. (*Giving letter to BRIAN*) All right. All right you tell him, Brian, I don't want that lie on my shoulders.

BRIAN. All right.

JACK. (*Opening them quickly and throwing them into basket*) M — m — autograph — (*Business*) auto — (*Business*) Photo — (*business*) Interviewing daily papers — (*Tossing it on table*) All right — (*Yawns*) Oh, I'm tired of this — I suppose we've got to have those people in. (*Tearing up letters*)

OTTO. Vait a minute. You must have your lesson first.

JACK. (*Looking hopelessly at the three men*) Oh, I say, I learned enough yesterday to carry me through this week.

BRIAN. Sure, but ye made a bad break yesterday.

JACK. You mean about Murililo?

VICTOR. Mon Dieu! Yes —

JACK. Ah, that wasn't so bad. I dont' believe anybody noticed it.

OTTO. Du Lieber! Do you know vat you say?

JACK. Anybody might have said it. How was I to know that Murillo wasn't the name of a cigar? It sounds just like it.

BRIAN. (*Crosses behind JACK — stops c. to speak*) Holy Smoke — and that's the very reason ye must keep on with the lessons. Come; are ye ready? (*Crosses to settee*)

JACK. Oh, well, have it your own way, but I've only half studied the thing. (*Takes paper out of his pocket and hurriedly runs over it while the three men sit in a line as examiners. BRIAN on settee*)

VICTOR & BRIAN. Put it away — put it away —

OTTO. Now, put it away, und answer. Vat is

der name of der last symphony you composed?

JACK. (*Rising as though to recite lesson — standing c. facing men — fidgeting*) Last symphony? Let's see — that was the symphony — in — eight sharps and —

OTTO. Ach Gott! — My boy — der is no sech key.

JACK. No, no, you're wrong, Otto, that was the one question I was sure of.

OTTO. But it is impossible.

JACK. Now, look here — (*Taking piece of music from piano*) A sharp is one of those tit-tat-two-things on the bias, isn't it?

OTTO. Ja — but —

JACK. Well, I counted them and there were eight.

OTTO. (*Patiently*) No, my sohn, only seven.

JACK. Oh, well, that's near enough. I didn't think one or two made so much difference.

OTTO. (*Sighs*) Go on, Victor, it's your turn.

JACK. (*c. seeks in pocket for paper*) Madonna, why — say is that quetsion on this list?

VICTOR. (*OTTO and BRIAN — "put it away"*) (*Sighing*) It is.

JACK. (*Thinking*) Madonna? Madonna? Oh, I know! The Madonna oblogata!

VICTOR. (*Starts to rise — BRIAN catches his arm*) Ah! Mon Dieu!

JACK. Now, hold on, don't get excited. I get three chances, don't I? (*VICTOR sinks back into chair*) Well, that's only one. Now, wait a minute — Madonna — Madonna (*VICTOR — in despair*)

JACK. Now, don't tell me — I was just going

to say it. It's the Sistine Madonna.

VICTOR. (*Shrieking*) Sacre bleu! — Sistine — Sistine!

JACK. Sure! that's right. I thought a Sistine was just a French name for — a tank.

VICTOR. But how would zat make sense? Can you not use a little reason?

JACK. Well, it's all your own fault. You don't know how to teach Art. How do you expect me to talk sense about a Madonna when I never saw one? Say, what is a Madonna anyway? (*OTTO and BRIAN explode with laughter. VICTOR throws up his hands and tears his hair. Rushes up R. C.*)

OTTO. Madonna, my son, means — Mother.

JACK. Does it? — Why didn't you tell me so in the first place, I could have remembered it. You know, I'm not really such a chump as you think. "Father" is Pa-donna! Then if Mother is Madonna — (*VICTOR writhes in agony — up L. C. to window*)

OTTO. I think you've had enough today, but study der same lesson for tomorrow.

JACK. (*Crosses R. C.*) Well, you won't catch me in Madonna again. My vocabulary is growing fast. (*Crossing to imaginary person R. C. and shaking hands*) Good matin — Raphael, how's your Madonna? That's all right, isn't it?

BRIAN. Sure, Jack — it's wonderful!

JACK. Good! Now, let's have those people in and get it over.. Victor bring on No. 1. (*BRIAN gives VICTOR cards. VICTOR goes to door and calls*) Ze Mastaire will see Mr. Cyril Farquahar — (*CYRIL enters. JACK goes to easel and takes palette and*

brushes; all the men stop smoking. VICTOR goes to door L. 3. E., and opens it. BRIAN sits at table to answer letters. OTTO with paper on Divan L. As VICTOR brings in CYRIL FARQUAHAR, JACK pretends to paint. CYRIL is a very young man who dresses in rather a Bohemian way, but is apparently well off.)

VICTOR. (*In an awe-struck voice*) Zere is ze mastaire. (*CYRIL advances*)

JACK. (*With his far away look over his head. VICTOR crosses behind easel*) Oh, good atfernoon. How is your Madonna?

CYRIL. (*Slowly to c.*) Mr. Spencer, I've come to ask a great favor of you —

JACK. (*With a sigh*) Yes! (*VICTOR R. of easel. OTTO L. on settee. BRIAN at table*)

CYRIL. My name is Cyril Farquahar —

JACK. Pretty name. isn't it?

CYRIL. And for years I have felt the possibilities of great things in my soul.

JACK. (*Keeps painting — Politely*) That's nice, isn't it?

CYRIL. (*Stutters*) But until now, I have been unable to give them suitable expression. (*Big sigh from c.*) Ah, you know what it is to feel the fire of inspiration burning within you —

JACK. (*Catching stutter*) Oh, yes, yes — I have felt it often. He's got me doing that now.

CYRIL. But you can give it immortal form, while I am helpless in its grasp. Oh, sir, in the name of Art, I ask you to take me as a pu — pu — pu —

JACK. Pupil. (*Rises*) Why, really, I —

CYRIL. Don't say it's too much to ask; I feel that I will be worthy of you —

JACK. Oh, no doubt — but you see the calls of Art are so exacting that I have been compelled to limit myself to three pupils — one for each of my Arts.

CYRIL. Then there is no hope for me?

JACK. (*Coming down to table*) I did not say that, but do you realize what a jealous Mistress Art is? (*Aside to BRIAN*) How's that?

BRIAN. Great.

CYRIL. (c) Yes — yes —

JACK. She is not to be wooed and won in a week.

OTTO. (*To VICTOR*) Dots sounds strangely familiar.

JACK. It means years and years, and years of hard work.

CYRIL. Only try me —

JACK. Well, although I take no more pupils myself, I sometimes allow my pupils to take a pupil — (*Crosses at front to easel*)

CYRIL. (c. *hands extended — turning to the three men*) Will you take me?

BRIAN. Bring some of your work around tomorrow, and we'll talk it over with you.

CYRIL. Oh, thank you; you won't regret it; I'm rich — (*JACK and the three artists shocked at mention of money*)

OTTO. (*In a grieved tone, holding up his hand*) Please, please!

CYRIL. Oh, I'm sorry — I — I'll see you tomorrow. Tomorrow — Tomorrow. (*Turns in an embarrassed way and bolts out*)

JACK. It's funny what an embarrassing effect I seem to have on everyone. (*To OTTO R. C.*)

OTTO. It's vat der papers call your "Wonderful personality."

JACK. All right Victor bring on No. 2.

VICTOR. Ze mastaire will se — (*Reading card*)
Mr. Cyrus Jenkins. (*CYRUS enters. JACK sees him coming and starts to paint as before. CYRUS is a stout, rather flashily dressed man of the nouveau riche type. VICTOR R. C. as before*)

VICTOR. (*As before*) Zere is ze mastaire.

JACK. (*As before*) Good afternoon.

CYRUS. (*Advancing and grasping his hand*) Mr. Spencer, I'm proud to know you; my name's Jenkins — Cyrus W. Jenkins, of Jenkins & Smith — woolen goods — Have a cigar? (*Offers it to him. JACK starts to take it*)

BRIAN. (*Meaningly — cough*) The master doesn't smoke — (*JACK refuses cigar*)

OTTO. Or drink —

VICTOR. He has never been kissed by a woman. (*JACK slaps VICTOR in stomach*)

CYRUS. (*Looking doubtfully at JACK*) Is the game worth the candle?

CYRUS. (*Looking disgustedly at the artists*) I — I love Art, Mr. Jenkins. (*Aside to VICTOR*) I'll get even with you for that. (*JACK down c.*)

CYRUS. H'm — well, let's go to business; I want to buy one of your pictures. (*The three men brighten up, but assume an air of indifference. VICTOR crosses to table L.*)

JACK. (*Down c.*) Oh, yes — well, couldn't you come around tomorrow? It's really after office

hours.

CYRUS. (*Down c.*) I promised my wife to get one for her today.

OTTO. (R) But der sale of von of der master's pictures is a matter of National importance —

CYRUS. Oh, that'll be all right. I'll see the reporters tonight, you see, my wife is dead anxious to butt into New York society, and the best way she could think of, was to get one of your pictures and then invite all the big people to a private view. They'd all come — and then we'd be right in it.

OTTO. Your wife is a brainy woman.

CYRUS. (*Crosses R. slaps OTTO on back*) Well, I should crack a smile. (*Turning to JACK*) Will you sell me one now, Mr. Spencer?

JACK. Oh, I haven't the heart to keep Mrs. Jenkins out of society (*Pointing to small picture — at back*) I'll sell you — (*VICTOR points secretly to picture he wishes sold — JACK takes cue*) that one.

CYRUS. Say, that's a real white one of you. What's the price?

JACK. Well, as it's such a small one, I guess a fair price would be — (*Bus. of whisper*) about thirty-five dollars. (*JACK looks to VICTOR who whippers 35. CYRUS surprised down L. c. sits at table writing check. BRIAN and OTTO shocked*)

VICTOR. (*With a shriek goes down on his knees before JACK —*) Sacre Bleu! Mon Dieu! — mastaire, mastaire, — do not give away ze gems of your art — we do not vant ze money — but do not insult ze priceless work. (*Whispers 3500 to JACK*)

JACK. (*c. turning to look at picture*) You see it is not my best work. (*Looks critically at picture*)

Oh, I don't know, I don't think thirty-five hundred dollars is insulting it. (*To CYRUS*)

CYRUS. (*At table*) Oh, I thought you said thirty-five dollars —

JACK. (*c. laughing heartily*) Yes, but I forgot the frame. (*VICTOR up R. wiping perspiration from brow*)

CYRUS. (*Making out check*) Well — (*Sighing*) I hope Mrs. J. will be satisfied now; when can you send it round?

JACK. (*Crosses R.*) Why, really, we don't send small orders —

OTTO. (*To JACK R. c. coming forward quickly*) We'll send it dis afternoon, Mr. Jenkins. (*To JACK*) You've done enough; you'd better rest a vile.

CYRUS. (*VICTOR to door L. CYRUS rising — offering check to JACK who refuses then offers to BRIAN who takes it.*) Well, here you are. Good day, Mr. Spencer, if you ever want anything in woolen goods, just let me know. (*Check is dropped on floor c. by BRIAN which JENKINS sees — JENKINS up and exits L. 3. E. As soon as CYRUS is out, the three artists make a rush for it — regard it with glee*)

BRIAN. Thirty-five hundred — Jack, my boy, you're a wonder; how's your honor feeling now, Victor?

VICTOR. (*To door L. 3. OTTO to piano*) He is feeling much bettaire, thank you.

JACK. Victor, bring on No. 3. (*VICTOR business as before. VICTOR ushers in LILLY SCOTT, a bashful, giggling school girl.*)

VICTOR. (*As before*) Zere is ze mastaire.

LILLY. (*Giggling and advancing timidly to JACK*) Mr. — Mr. Spencer — (*Giggles — VICTOR crosses down R.*)

JACK. (*Turning to her as before*) Oh, good afternoon. (*She giggles. Aside*) Good Lord! What's this? (*To VICTOR*)

LILLY. I hope you won't think I'm bold. (*VICTOR R. of JACK — LILLY C.*)

JACK. (*Dreamily*) To the artist nothing is bold. (*LILLY giggles. Aside to VICTOR*) What's the matter with her? (*VICTOR reassures him*)

LILLY. (*C*) No one knows I'm here.

JACK. (*C. — with palette and brushes*) This is not a proposal of marriage, is it?

LILLY. What! Oh — (*Bursts into a giggle*)

JACK. (*Aside to VICTOR*) I wish she wouldn't do that.

OTTO. (*Down L. C. To LILLY*) It's all right; a couple of women proposed to him last week, and he's nervous. (*Giggle — Business OTTO to piano*)

LILLY. The girls said — (*Face takes on the giggle but she smothers it*) I wouldn't dare do it.

JACK. (*Politely*) Oh, did they? and did you? (*She giggles*)

BRIAN. Said ye wouldn't dare do what?

LILLY. Call on a great man like Mr. Spencer — (*Restrains giggle*) just to ask for — (*Giggles*)

JACK. (*Aside*) I shall swear in a minute! (*To LILLY*) To ask for —

LILLY. (*Struggling with her desire to giggle*) For — for your autograph.

JACK. My autograph? (*JACK turns to VICTOR then crosses down to table and writes; then stops and looks at LILLY; she gives a little giggle. BRIAN*

gives him card. JACK *looks at BRIAN, then writes on card and gives it to her*)

LILLY. Oh, thank you ever so much.

JACK. Now, don't lose it. (*Crosses R. C.*)

LILLY. No — I'll sleep with it under my pillow every night. (*C. coming and holding out her hand*)
Good night.

JACK. (*Taking her hand absent mindedly*)
Pleasant dreams.

LILLY. Oh, (*Giggling*) I meant good-bye (*Crosses L. 3. E. and exit, giggling*)

JACK. Yes, so did I — (*As LILLY exits giggling — JACK giggles nervously. To others*) Say, that's a new kind. (*Crosses C.*)

OTTO. Vell, dot's a good morning's vork, eh, boys?

BRIAN. (*Coming in front of table*) It's all right.

JACK. And now, how about a spin in the auto?

OTTO. You forget — we have an engagement at Mrs. Van Browne-Smythe's Tea.

JACK. Oh, don't let's go; I'm just spoiling for a breath of fresh, inartistic air. (*Crosses R.*)

BRIAN. But the Tea's given in your honor —

VICTOR. (*In front of easel*) You are ze lion of ze occasion.

JACK. (*R. C. to 3 men C.*) Now, look here; I went to two Teas and a reception yesterday, didn't I?

OTTO. Yes, you were a good boy yesterday.

JACK. Then I'm going to be a bad boy today. Good Lord! even a genius is entitled to an occasional day off. (*Crosses down R.*)

OTTO. Now, Jack, be reasonable — (*Three*

men follow him)

JACK. No, I won't be reasonable. I'm sick of the whole game. (*Crosses L. backing 3 men L.*) Receptions, teas, luncheons, autographs, photographs, interviews, would-be pupils, would-be god children, cigars that want to bear my name, brain foods that want my head, collars who want my neck, tooth powders that want my teeth; say, if I'd known what a time I was stepping into, I'd never have begun this genius business. (*Back to c.*)

OTTO. But it's too late to stop now, und der tea —

JACK. If you say tea to me again — I'll — I'll — sing!

OTTO. (*To JACK c.*) Ach Gott! — I von't, I von't —

JACK. Go to the darned tea yourselves; tell 'em I'm sick in bed — tell 'em I've eloped; tell 'em anything you please — only get out, and let me forget Art exists.

OTTO. But it's so rude.

JACK. Oh, no, not rude, pardon me — (*Sarcastically*) I'm a genius. (*Walking them up L.*) I cannot be rude; the worst I can be is a little eccentric; now, clear out! (*Crosses down R. They start to go. JACK waves them out*)

OTTO. Vell, I hope you're in a better temper ven ve come back — at present your genius is too natural to be amusing. (*JACK crosses c.*)

BRIAN. (*At door*) And don't forget, Jack, that you neither smoke nor drink —

JACK. (*Walking about*) Go to the devil.

OTTO. Don't go out, because everyone will recognize you. (*JACK waves them away*)

VICTOR. And remember you have nevaire been kissed by woman —

JACK. (*Takes fez off his head and throws it at VICTOR. The three artists laugh and exit. JACK stands c. looking miserable. Looks at his watch; then sinks on couch down R.*) Four o'clock — a beautiful day, and that auto just eating its head off in the stable — oh, well — (*Sighs, crosses and locks door L. 3. E. then raises visor of one stand of armour and takes out bottle of whiskey; raises visor of other stand, takes out box of cigars, puts them on table; opens bottom of music stand and gets siphon and glasses; pours out whiskey and drinks with sign of delight, then lights a long cigar. Knock is heard. JACK R. with an exclamation of disgust, quickly puts things back in visors and music stand.*)

JACK. Yes, who's there? (*Whistle is heard*) Why, its Nell. (*JACK stops, the whistle is heard again, and JACK dashes over to door L, opens it and admits NELL who is quietly but well dressed*)

JACK. Thank Heaven! (*Taking both her hands*) Nell, you're just in time to save my reason.

NELL. Why, what's the matter? (*Both down c. JACK R. of NELL*)

JACK. I can't make out whether I'm a lion in an ass's skin, or an ass in a lion's skin.

NELL. (*Laughs*) In either case, the other animals haven't recognized your voice — Where are Otto and the boys?

JACK. At Mrs. Van Brown-Smythe's tea. I didn't go — because I'm not feeling well.

NELL. What is it?

JACK. Inflammation of the genius, I guess —

take off your hat and talk to a fellow.

NELL. I can talk just as well with it on.

JACK. No, you can't; somehow, when you take off your hat, and make yourself at home here, the hard lot of a genius seems a little easier to bear.

NELL. Well, if you'll be good and let me give you a lesson, I'll stay. (*Crosses R.*)

JACK. Won't you let me off today? (*Following her*) I don't feel artistic —

NELL. (*Sits on settee*) No, you mustn't shirk your work; now, first, draw me a head. (*JACK sighs, puts blank canvas on easel, and quickly draws in charcoal a caricature head*)

JACK. (*As he draws*) This is all a fake, anyhow; I'll never be able to draw anything except a bob tail flush, and a check. (*Brings it down*) There, that's the best I can do. One of my ancestors —

NELL. It's rather impressionistic —

JACK. Yes, ancestor on my mother's side — (*Puts it back*) Say, how is all this going to end?

NELL. I don't know — I never thought of that.

JACK. Well, I've been thinking of it a great deal, and the more I think the more difficult I find it to get out of the woods; my reputation keeps on growing and there's no stopping the game without showing us all to be cheats and swindlers.

NELL. (*Rising*) There is only one thing to do — you've got a reputation and you must live up to it. Come, take off your coat and get to work on this clay. (*JACK takes off coat and NELL rolls up her sleeves — through the next scene they are working on the clay, NELL instructing him, they bring modeling stand down c.*)

JACK. (R. of stand) Ah, Nell, you're doing your best to keep a leaky ship afloat.

NELL. (L. of stand — *Intent on modeling*) Use your thumb — like this.

JACK. I haven't got a thumb like that.

NELL. Don't be silly; you know what I mean.

JACK. Shall I tell you what I mean?

NELL. Tell me first how things are progressing between you — and Miss Van Dusen.

JACK. That's easily told — they're not progressing at all.

NELL. Won't she listen to you now?

JACK. (*Rolling little balls of clay and throwing them at bust*) Well, you see — I — I haven't called on her in over a week, and, oh, — I don't think she cares about me. (*Business—throws clay at bust*)

NELL. But it's not like you to accept defeat in this way, after doing so much, too.

JACK. I don't intend to accept defeat. (*Bus. slaps clay on NELL'S hand*)

JACK. Oh, I beg your pardon.

NELL. But I thought —

JACK. Yes, but my plans are all changed now —

NELL. And you never told me anything about it.

JACK. I didn't tell anyone. (*Looking at her*) You see, I wanted to ask you first, how girls look at these things. (*Putting big nose on bust with clay*)

NELL. (L. of stand) What things?

JACK. (R. of stand) Nell, do you — do you believe a man's affections can change?

NELL. Well, from what little I've seen of the world — I should think they can.

JACK. What does a girl think of a man whose affections have changed?

NELL. It depends whether they have changed to her, or from her.

JACK. Suppose they have changed to her?

NELL. Then — it all depends upon circumstances.

JACK. (*Crosses to stand R. C. — Washing and drying his hands*) The circumstances are that a chap thinks he is in love with a girl who doesn't care a rap for him. He meets another girl, who shows him, for the first time in his life, the charm of real womanliness, without knowing it he becomes more and more dependent upon her advice and companionship, until one day he realizes that he doesn't love the first girl at all, and that if the other goes out of his life — there'll be nothing left in it.

NELL. (*L. of stand*) We're forgetting the lesson.

JACK. Yes, let's forget it — because I'm the chap, and you're the girl.

NELL. Mr. Spencer, I --- (*Takes part of towel and cleans hands*)

JACK. I'm an awful fool — Have a piece of soap — Nell, you're the best influence that ever came into my life, don't go out of it —

NELL. A little more than two weeks ago you were planning to marry Miss Van Dusen; you didn't even know there was a girl called Nell Graham.

JACK. Of course, I didn't, or I wouldn't have been planning to marry anyone but her. (*Both are in front of stand*) Why, when I'd known you two days I began to thank my lucky stars that Josephine

had refused me.

NELL. If you could be mistaken once, why not twice?

JACK. Now, that's unkind. This is the first time in my life I've ever changed my mind about **a matter of this sort, and you are the last one who should blame me for it.**

NELL. Why?

JACK. Because, you are the cause of it; you've saved the happiness of two lives, Nell — hers and mine. She would have been miserable with me, and the thought of a whole life full of Art — Oh— (*Shudders*)

NELL. I've lived in the world of Art all my life.

JACK. But you've lived by Art, and not for Art. When you look at a fine piece of work your eyes sparkle and you love it because it's good and big, not because "the tone-color reminds you of Rubens." (*He has wiped the clay off his hands and tried to take hers. She draws away*)

NELL. Mr. Spencer. (*Crosses L. taking towel and sits R. of table*)

JACK. (*Holding end of towel and following her*) Please don't call me Mr. Spencer; it puts a stone wall between us.

NELL. You really haven't had time to know your own mind.

JACK. (*Sits on table*) Time isn't a matter of days and weeks; I've wanted you all my life. Don't blame me because I didn't meet you till two weeks ago. How much time did Romeo need to know that he loved Juliet? About ten minutes, and, besides, I forced myself to be slow. For a whole week I wouldn't let myself believe that you were

the one woman. Don't you see it's a matter of life and death? I want you and me to be chums — and the only proper way to be chums is to be married.

NELL. You are a rich man. I am an artist's model —

JACK. I know that — but it's got nothing to do with the question.

NELL. But don't you see that if I marry you —

JACK. Now, don't say the old thing about my friends not receiving you and all that; we're not living in a problem play — this is real life.

NELL. You will find it more real than you think.

JACK. My dear girl, I'm not one of those idiots who believe that money conquers all things, but the fact that I'm rich doesn't prevent your having more culture in your little hand than I have in my whole body. Why, the first time I ever saw you, I knew you were a lady, because you didn't tell me you were. Come, don't let my money stand between us. All rich men are not scamps. I thought I cared for Josephine and if I hadn't met you I might have gone through life without knowing what love was. But I did meet you, Nell, and now I'm free to ask you to be my wife.

NELL. Are you sure I could make you happy?

JACK. Sure? Sure if you will only say you will have me. (*Taking her hand*) Why, if you'll only promise to marry me — (*A knock at the door interrupts him*)

NELL. (*Starting away from him*) There's someone at the door.

JACK. Yes, I heard him too — It's not the boys' knock. (*They move stand up c. Putting on his coat, and pausing with it half way on*) Ah, Nell,

Don't forget what I just told you. (*Another knock interrupts him, and he quickly finishes putting on his coat*) Say, wait until I get rid of him, and then we'll go on with the lesson where we left off. That's the worst of a studio. Everyone comes right in whether he's wanted or not.

NELL. (R) Who is it?

JACK. (R. C.) Whoever it is, I'll get him out in two minutes. Wait behind the screen.

NELL. Why should I? —

JACK. It would have been all right for us to have been alone together before I was a genius, but geniuses seem to have a different code of morals, and — (*Leading her toward the screen*) It's all right for them but rough on the girl.

NELL. Still — I don't see —

JACK. You don't know how these people talk. What is all right on Washington Square is most improper on Fifth Avenue.

NELL. (*Down R.*) I don't like to hide as if I'd done wrong —

JACK. Then there's only one alternative — either you must go behind that screen or let me tell them we're engaged to be married.

NELL. Oh! Well — I'll go. (*Toward screen*)

JACK. I'd rather tell them we're engaged.

NELL. No, that would look like a sacrifice on your part.

JACK. Nonsense! (*NELL goes behind screen*) Well, I won't be a minute. (*Knock is repeated. JACK calls out "all right" and starts to open door. Loud*) Yes, yes — (*JACK goes and opens door, admitting a woman heavily veiled*)

MISS TREVOR. This is Mr. Spencer?

JACK. (*Nervously*) Er — yes — (*Putting on his manner*) Good afternoon. (*Taking a few steps R. C.*)

MISS TREVOR. Are you alone?

JACK. (*Looking around as if half frightened*) er — yes — (*Crosses down R.*)

MISS TREVOR. (*Sits L. R. of table*) Can you spare me a few moments on a confidential matter?

JACK. Er — yes — (*Aside*) I wish I'd gone to the tea! I had a bad dream last night — they always come out —

MISS TREVOR. Mr. Spencer, in my whole life I've never done anything which would make the world better for my having lived in it.

JACK. (*R. C.*) Oh, I'm so sorry —

MISS TREVOR. Life has been a mad whirl of social functions.

JACK. (*Aside*) How tactless!

MISS TREVOR. But when I first saw your wonderful work in painting and sculpture, I knew that, at last, a field was open to me —

JACK. (*Crosses C.*) But I don't take pupils.

MISS TREVOR. You don't understand me; fate has been very generous to me in the matter of physical charm.

JACK. (*Looks around nervously*) Ah, indeed! (*Crosses R. C. sits on settee*)

MISS TREVOR. (*Crosses to JACK — taking off her hat and veil with it*) My friends have told me that if I would consent to pose, the artist would be inspired to great things. I've thought it all over and decided, that just as your gifts belong to the world, mine belong to you. (*JACK thunderstruck. Sitting beside JACK*) Will you not make me the

model of your next picture?

JACK. Why, thank you, really, I don't think —
(*With a sudden thought*) You know my next picture is a — a little conception of the Creation.

MISS TREVOR. The Creation! A subject worthy of you!

JACK. — and the only figures I show are — Adam and Eve — at twilight.

MISS TREVOR. Well, as to Eve?

JACK. (*Twirling string of gown*) Yes, but, of course, I can only use professional models.

MISS TREVOR. And yet it seems a pity that you should be driven to use mercenary people in a work like that.

JACK. Yes, but, of course, it can't be helped.

MISS TREVOR. Suppose I show you — (*Business picking handkerchief*) That there is one woman who, for the sake of Art, can rise above the conventionalities.

JACK. (*Rising — Taking her meaning*) What! (*Aside*) I've called a straight flush!

MISS TREVOR. You are an artist and you will understand, that is all I ask. (JACK *crosses L.*) Of course, I must come to you secretly.

JACK. (c. MISS TREVOR *rises*) But —

MISS TREVOR. And even you must not know my name, (*Drawing a sigh of satisfaction*) Well, that's settled. (JACK *is too dazed to speak*) Now, when do you want me to begin?

JACK. (*Sits on chair R. of table*) I — I don't know — I — (*Aside*) Four years from next March — Oh, why don't those men come back? — I'm getting so nervous.

MISS TREVOR. (*Rising*) I will be ready at any

time; this afternoon — if you wish. (*Crossing to him*)

JACK. (*Jumping up*) No, no not now — I haven't got my ideas together. I — I — (*Desperately — back to settee*) don't you see you're disturbing my atmosphere?

MISS TREVOR. Then I'll leave you — (*Putting on her hat*) and remember, no one is to know but you and I.

JACK. You need have no fear. I'm just as much ashamed of it as you are.

MISS TREVOR. (*Crossing to door*) I'll come in every day to find out when you're ready to begin — au revoir! (*Exit*)

JACK. (*Going up c. As door closes*) No, no, I won't begin for months, for years, I may never begin — (*Looks at door*) Oh, Lord! What a life! (*Knock at the door. JACK opens door admitting woman heavily veiled. Working down c.*) I'm very sorry, madam, but I have all the models I can possibly use; if you will send me your name and address, I'll let you know the first vacancy that occurs. I'm very sorry, but, of course, I didn't know you were coming— (*Bowing*) Good day. (*The woman removes her veil and is discovered to be JOSEPHINE*) Josephine! (*JACK glances at screen and seems to be ill at ease*)

JOSEPHINE. Jack, are we — alone? (*He sees NELL'S hat and throws it over screen*)

JACK. Didn't you bring a chaperone?

JOSEPHINE. No, what I have to say is for no other ears than yours.

JACK. Then we'd better wait — I — I expect my friends back every moment.

JOSEPHINE. (*Crosses to table L. sits*) I left Mrs. Van Browne-Smythe's as soon as they arrived. I had to see you, Jack; I hope you do not think me unmaidenly in coming to see you?

JACK. (*Getting more and more uneasy*) Nothing is unmaidenly that is done in the cause of Art.

JOSEPHINE. But this is a personal matter.

JACK. (*Aside*) My finish!

JOSEPHINE. I've just found out why you've avoided me for the past week.

JACK. (c) *Oh!* (*Looks toward screen and squirms*)

JOSEPHINE. You were afraid, now that you are famous, that your attentions might compromise me, but I, too, have been thinking, and decided that rather than ruin the happiness of two lives, I would come to you and disregard the conventionalities—

JACK. (*Crosses R.*) Eh? What? How do you mean?

JOSEPHINE. (*Rising and following to c.*) By telling you that I regret my foolish words, and will accept your offer of marriage — (*JACK too dumb-founded to speak, sinks on sofa*) It was noble of you to conceal your genius, but, after all, was it quite fair to me?

JACK. (*To her c.*) Josephine, what you are saying is very flattering to me, but you're deceiving yourself. You don't care a rap for me.

JOSEPHINE. (L. c.) You are cruel —

JACK. (c) No, really, suppose that after all, I knew nothing of Art, that I were the plain Jack Spencer you used to know —

JOSEPHINE. My eyes have been opened, and I can see your soul —

JACK. Can you — where?

JOSEPHINE. Whether or not you can create with your hands, I can see for myself the soul of a great artist.

JACK. (*Crosses R. C.*) But, my dear girl, you're deceiving yourself. My soul hasn't changed a bit. I've got the same old soul I've had for years.

JOSEPHINE. (*Following to C.*) Ah, Jack, I have a woman's instinct, which tells me what you are. For years I have been waiting for the perfect man — and now I know you are he.

JACK. (*Coming C. turning on her*) Who told you that?

JOSEPHINE. Everyone knows that your lips have never been touched by woman.

JACK. (*Turning away*) I'll kill that damn Frenchman.

JOSEPHINE. (*Crossing to him*) That is why I know you would understand if I came myself — to bring you my answer. (*A loud knock at the door, up L. C. JOSEPHINE starts*) Oh, we're discovered! Jack, hide me. (*Crosses L. above table*)

JACK. (*To C*) Why, it's all right.

JOSEPHINE. No, no, I mustn't be found alone with you.

JACK. Why not? We've done nothing wrong.

JOSEPHINE. No, but if a girl is found alone with a genius, her reputation is ruined.

JACK. (*Indignantly*) No — I don't believe it. (*Looks at screen*)

JOSEPHINE. It's true — ah, you must hide me!

JACK. (*Crosses R. 2.*) All right. Here — (*Crossing to R. 2. E.*) In this room. (*JOSEPHINE starts to go in — then recoils with a cry*)

JOSEPHINE. (*Starts back*) Oh, — no, no —

JACK. What's the matter?

JOSEPHINE. It's a bed room!

JACK. (*Desperately*) I can't help it; you don't expect me to sleep in the park do you?

JOSEPHINE. (*Crosses L. c.*) Oh! I couldn't go in there?

JACK. (*Falling to c.*) It's the only place I've got. (*Another knock*)

JOSEPHINE. (*Seeing screen*) Ah, I'll go behind this screen.

JACK. (*To R. c. Stopping her*) No, no — not there!

JOSEPHINE. (*They dodge each other*) Yes — yes — Let me go, Jack —

JACK. No, no, you don't understand. It might be improper on Washington Square, but it's all right on Fifth Avenue. (*Knock*)

JOSEPHINE. They're coming in — my reputation — (*Tries to go to screen*)

JACK. (*Holding her back*) Who would dare say anything against it?

JOSEPHINE. (*To him behind settee*) Jack. There's only one alternative — you must announce our engagement!

JACK. What? No, not — not so soon, that is, we're not engaged — (*Another knock*)

JOSEPHINE. Then I will go behind that screen.

JACK. No, no — I take it back; I'll tell them anything you like.

JOSEPHINE. (*Front of settee — Calming down and going down R.*) Very well. Open the door. (*JACK, with an agonized look at the screen goes and opens door. PERCY comes in*)

JACK. (*With slight surprise*) Oh, how d'ye do, Clutterbuck. I thought I heard someone knock.

PERCIVAL. (*Coming L. c. JACK c.*) Knock! I should say you did! (*Seeing JOSEPHINE*)

JACK. You are knocking so much better.

PERCIVAL. Why, Josephine, where is your mother?

JOSEPHINE. At Mrs. Van Browne-Smythe's —

PERCIVAL. (*c*) Surely, you have not been rash enough to come alone to a studio — (*Turning to JACK*) Spencer, how could you permit her to do so?

JACK. Permit her — Gosh! (*Up stage c.*)

JOSEPHINE. (*To JACK*) But it's all right, Percy; Jack and I have decided to announce our engagement. (*Head on JACK's shoulder*)

PERCIVAL. Your engagement. (*Turns to JACK who is forced to nod*)

JOSEPHINE. (*L. c. Crossing to PERCY*) Congratulate me, Percy; I'm the happiest girl in the world.

PERCIVAL. (*L. Mournfully*) I congratulate you both.

JACK. (*R. More mournfully*) Thank you.

JOSEPHINE. And now I must be going back to Mrs. Van Browne-Smythe's. Mamma and I will stop for you on the way home, Jack.

JACK. (*Despairingly*) All right.

JOSEPHINE. Good-bye, Percy. (*Turns and holds out her hands to JACK. In a tone full of love*) Good-bye, Jack. My Genius. (*Holds out both her hands*)

JACK. (*Takes her right hand absent-mindedly, shakes it, then takes left same business*) Good-bye —

JOSEPHINE. (*At door*) But only for half an hour. (*She exits. JACK closes door and comes down R. C. PERCY at table*)

PERCIVAL. Spencer, you must be a very happy man?

JACK. (R. C.) Yes, mustn't I?

PERCIVAL. (*To c.*) You know what my feeling toward her has been; but you've beaten me fairly. (*Holding out his hands*) Be good to her, Spencer—

JACK. (*Crosses c. Taking his hands — Both c.*) Clutterbuck, don't give up hope, old man, you've still got a chance.

PERCIVAL. What do you mean?

JACK. A girl as young as Josephine doesn't know her own mind — she may really care more for you.

PERCIVAL. Even if she does, I cannot, in honor, make love to my friend's fiancée. (*Crosses and takes hat from table*) Good-bye, Spencer; I came to talk business, but if you don't mind, I'll put it off till tomorrow. (*Up to door.*)

JACK. I don't mind.

PERCIVAL. (*Up to door L. 3. E.*) You see I really thought quite a lot of that girl. (*Sighs and exits. JACK crosses L. C. turns and NELL comes slowly out from behind screen*)

JACK. Nell, I — I don't know what to say to you —

NELL. (*c. Trying to smile*) There is nothing to be said.

JACK. (L.C.) You must despise me —

NELL. (*c. holding out her hand*) You poor boy, you did it for me.

JACK. (*Taking her hand*) Nell, you're the best

little Pal a man ever had. (*She starts for door L. R.*) You're not going to leave me?

NELL. I must.

JACK. (L) But you'll let me see you tomorrow—

NELL. (*Shaking her head*) No —

JACK. (L) You don't mean our friendship has got to stop?

NELL. It is better for us both that it should.

JACK. But, Nell, it's the best thing in my life.

NELL. You must put it out of your life.

JACK. But it's you I love — you!

NELL. (c) You are engaged to Miss Van Dusen.

JACK. I can't help it — (*Crossing R.*) I didn't want to be — (*Turns to her*) I won't marry anyone but you. She knows I don't want to marry her —

NELL. (c) You have promised, and she will hold you to your word.

JACK. It's all this genius business. I'll denounce myself as an imposter; I'd rather go to prison than marry her.

NELL. You mustn't break faith with the boys.

JACK. And if I remain famous she'll make me marry her. Confound it! I don't want to be a human sacrifice to Art. Oh, Nell, isn't there any way out of it?

NELL. No — Good-bye —

JACK. (R. *turning to her*) Nell, you can't leave me alone in this horrible world of Art. I'm like a child in a desert.

NELL. Oh, you can manage without me now.

JACK. (*Going to her*) I'll never be able to manage without you as long as I live. (*She starts to go, he takes her hand*) Only tell me one thing

— Do you care, too?

NELL. You mustn't ask me — that — Good-bye —

JACK. Not good-bye, Nell, just — so long —
(He stands c. watching her off — "NELL" — He presses her hand, and she exits quickly L. 3. E. He pauses and waves to her from the door, then closes the door, goes up to the window and waves from there, then turns and begins to get angry. He rips off his coat and throws it down, reaches inside door R. 2. E. and gets out automobile hat and coat; while he puts them on, sticks a cigar in his mouth, and meanwhile the three artists enter L. 3. E. laughing and talking. They stop on seeing JACK)

OTTO. *(Rushing over to JACK)* Jack, my boy, I congratulate you.

BRIAN. *(In line with OTTO)* So you've brought it off at last.

VICTOR. *(In line with BRIAN)* Miss Van Dusen is waiting for you down stairs.

OTTO. But vat are you doing?

BRIAN. Sure, he's breakin' the rules.

VICTOR. Ze automobile, mon Dieu! He will be recognized!

OTTO. Jack, vere are you going?

JACK. *(Through his teeth)* I'm going to the stable, and I'm going to have that auto loaded up to nozzle with gasoline, then I'm going carefully through this town, till I get out into God's country; then I'm going to pull that lever as far out as she'll go, and make up for two weeks; I'm going to leave a line of dust half across the state, and I'm coming back when I get ready. *(To door)*

VICTOR. But your promise to us —

JACK. Oh, I'll keep my promise.

OTTO. But your fiancee —

JACK. Fiancee — be damned — (*Rushes off*
L. 3. E.)

-:- CURTAIN -:-

*2nd Curtain all three artists heads out door back
to audience*

-:- THE GENIUS -:-

ACT III

TIME:-*One week later. Music at rise.*

SCENE:- *Art Exhibition Room in New York City.*

The stage shows one of a connected series of art rooms. Large arch R. 2. E., and L. 2. E. leading into rooms R. and L. Entrance at back on extreme L. leading into room devoted to sculpture, and through this entrance a glimpse is caught of several pieces of sculpture. The room is richly hung, and all entrances have portieres. Large circular settee, such as used in art galleries up c. Small settee R. and L. The entire back wall is covered with pictures, most of those in Act I being used. Pictures on L. wall. Piano standing below R. arch.

CYRIL. (*Entering upper L. with CYRUS. To CYRUS*) It was very generous of you, Mr. Jenkins, to lend your Spencer to the exhibit.

CYRUS. (*To c.*) Oh, I couldn't refuse. The Committee called on my wife and asked her for it. (*They stroll around together and off R. 2. E.*)

MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE. (*Enters right upper with PERCY. Down c. to PERCY*) Yes, this exhibition is a positive triumph for you, Mr. Clutterbuck.

PERCY. For me?

MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE. (R) Yes. Had it not been for you, Spencer might still have been hiding his light under a bushel; the world of Art can never pay you its debt of gratitude.

PERCY. (R. c. *Complacently*) Oh, you flatter me, Mrs. Van Brown-Smythe; What I have done in the way of giving him help and advice, has perhaps aided him a little. (*MISS TREVOR rises up*)

and off R. slowly)

MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE. A little! why, everybody knows he owes his present position to you alone. Your discovery of him has made you the critic of New York.

PERCY. To the trained eye — (*Indicates painting*) His talent was quite self-evident. There is no credit due me for discovering that, (*Walking*) but it has gratified me very much to see how my friends have upheld my opinions.

MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE. (*Indicating two pictures — L.*) Why, could anything be plainer than the genius of his work? Only compare his painting with his pupil Le Mercier. Some people have said that their styles are similar, but we who know can see the difference, the wonderful transition of tones, (*JOSEPHINE and MRS. VAN DUSEN enter R. crosses to C. The instant JOSEPHINE enters, PERCY up C.*) the depth of conception in every stroke of the brush, mark the master, while the work of his pupil is, after all, mere imitation. (*By this time the others have strolled off R. and L.*)

MRS. VAN DUSEN. (*Crosses L. C. To MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE.*) Why, my dear how do you do? (*She talks with MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE*)

PERCY. (*To JOSEPHINE*) You have not yet publicly announced your engagement?

JOSEPHINE. No, Mamina wanted to refurnish the drawing-room first.

MRS. VAN DUSEN. (*To MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE*) Mr. Spencer himself gave me the color scheme pink plush against pale green wall paper. He is so delightfully original in these matters. (*JACK*

enters through arch L. down c. Looks rather haggard and unkept. As soon as he appears all four people rush to him. MRS. VAN DUSEN L. of PERCY, and MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE L. of MRS. VAN DUSEN JOSEPHINE R. of JACK. LILLY jumps up and stands admiring JACK, then off R.) Oh, there you are! How do you do? I was so afraid you weren't coming — everyone has been waiting for a glimpse of you, etc., etc. (*JACK tries to greet them all at once, and smiles in a sickly way*)

JACK. (*Coming a little below ottoman c.*) Good afternoon, good afternoon —

PERCY. Your three pupils were asking for you.

(*Exit CYRIL and LILLY R. 3. E.*)

JACK. Don't tell them I'm here; I wish to say a few words to Miss Van Dusen before I see them.

PERCY. Oh, very well, we'll leave you alone together. (*To the two ladies*) Come, ladies, let me show you the new piece of sculpture only cast yesterday. (*MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE bows to JACK up L. with PERCY. He leads MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE to L. U. E.*)

MRS. VAN DUSEN. (*Crosses to JACK*) Remember, you can be seen from both sides.

JACK. (*L. Looking at her blankly*) Yes, but —

MRS. VAN DUSEN. (*Shaking her finger at JACK and laughing*) Oh, a word to the wise; your engagement will not be announced until tomorrow. (*Join the others and exeunt L. U. E. JACK turns to JOSEPHINE, who has seated herself on settee c.*)

JACK. (*Way down R.*) Josephine, there is something I want to say to you.

JOSEPHINE. (*On circular settee*) Yes, come here and tell me.

JACK. (*Sitting by her, but keeping as far away as possible*) You may have noticed that my manner during the last week has been absent — pre-occupied —

JOSEPHINE. Yes, I have noticed it, and I knew there was something on your mind — something that stands between the perfect affinity of our souls.

JACK. A term you used the other day has been ringing in my ears, and I must tell you the truth.

JOSEPHINE. The truth?

JACK. Josephine, I am unworthy of you.

JOSEPHINE. Ah, you must let me judge of that.

JACK. You said you had been waiting for the “perfect man” and that you had found him in me.

JOSEPHINE. (*Looking at him lovingly*) Yes.

JACK. You were never more deceived in your life; that is why I would not touch your lips — I wished you to know all —

JOSEPHINE. All! What do you mean?

JACK. I don't know how to tell you —

JOSEPHINE. (*The idea dawning on her*) Have you a past?

JACK. Yes, that's the word; I have more pasts than I can remember. (*JOSEPHINE rises, crosses down c. JACK rises — following. He looks hopeful*) Now you know why I am unfit for you; I will not drag you down to my level — and I release you from your promise to me. (*JOSEPHINE slowly turns and looks at him, then holds out her hands which he is forced to take*)

JOSEPHINE. Forgive me —

JACK. Forgive you! For what?

JOSEPHINE. For shrinking from you.

JACK. (*Trying to release his hands and back*

away from her) You were right. Don't try to save my feelings — Oh, when I think of what I am — I shrink from myself.

JOSEPHINE. No, I was wrong; I did not realize that genius is not like the common herd. (*JACK releases his hands*) There is nothing wrong in your admiration of other women.

JACK. (*Crosses down L.*) But, you don't understand —

JOSEPHINE. (*Following him*) I am a poor, ordinary woman; my brain is not sufficient to be your sole mental companion; no one woman can supply the feminine compliment of a soul as large as yours. No, I will not be jealous of them.

JACK. But I tell you I'm thoroughly bad (*Crosses R. C.*) I haven't told you half — I'm a drunkard — a gambler — I walk in my sleep.

JOSEPHINE. (*c*) What would be bad in the rest of the world, is only your freedom from the narrow laws of men.

JACK. But, my dear girl, I'm a brute; if you marry me I'm sure I should beat you — I'm subject to fits of unreasonable rage; I walk in my sleep — (*Crosses to c.*)

JOSEPHINE. (*Follows*) No, I won't listen to another word — we must learn to forgive each other little things.

JACK. Little things? —

JOSEPHINE. Yes, in the light of our perfect understanding all these external facts are very small. (*JACK up to ottoman c.* — *JOSEPHINE following him*) and I will help you overcome temptations. If you strike me, I shall know it is not you, but just a physical reaction from your

work. (JACK *sinks in settee*. JOSEPHINE *looking off* R. 2. E.) Here come your pupils, I'll go to Mamma. Now don't think about it any more; you should have trusted me from the first. (*Turns and exit* L. 3. E. *Enter the three artists* R. 2. E. *They stop as they see* JACK)

BRIAN. (*Crosses to ottoman*) Ah, there ye are; how did ye get away from the crowd?

JACK. They haven't seen me yet.

OTTO. (*Below BRIAN*) Vell, cheer up, anyhow, I don't know vat is der matter lately — ever since you told me of your engagement you haf been silent — and blue.

VICTOR. (*Below OTTO*) But et is good for ze business, you haf nevaire looked so like a genius before —

JACK. I guess you'd look blue if your last hope had just gone out that door.

OTTO. Vy, Has Miss Van Dusen broken her engagement?

JACK. (*Rising*) No, hang it all! She won't. I've told her I'm everything from a wife beater to a horse thief, but she thinks that being a genius makes up for everything.

BRIAN. (*Coming down c. with OTTO and VICTOR to settee* R.) Why, do ye want her to break the engagement?

JACK. (*On settee* L.) Say, are you men blind? Can't you see that my one thought is to make Josephine throw me over? I can't go back on my word —

VICTOR. (*In front of settee* R.) But vy haf you changed your mind?

JACK. Boys, I've got a confession to make.

OTTO. Don't tell it to us, write it; it vill bring in more cash than all der three arts together. (*Crosses to settee R. and sit*) Ve can call it "Confessions of a Genius." (*Three artists sit on settee R.*)

JACK. Don't hit a man when he's down — I'm serious.

OTTO. Vell, vot is der confession.

JACK. (*Rising and crossing to c.*) I'm trying to break off my engagement with Miss Van Dusen — because I want to marry Nell Graham. (*The three men look at one another amazed. They rise*) This genius business has got everything balled up.

OTTO. So; now I see vy Nell has been so quiet for der last veek.

JACK. (*Eagerly*) Has she? Do you think she cares?

OTTO. And you haf made lofe to her vile you were engaged to this Miss Van Dusen?

JACK. No, I haven't. The minute I became engaged, I stopped seeing Nell.

OTTO. (*Crosses to JACK C. BRIAN to OTTO'S place*) So — you play with our little girl — by tam! dot's too much. Vee help you vin Miss Van Dusen, and you repay us by making our Nell unhappy.

JACK. Now, go slow, old man, I asked Nell to marry me and —

OTTO. You asked her to marry you!

JACK. Yes.

OTTO. Gott in Himmel! How many women do you vant to marry, anyhow?

JACK. (*Getting angry*) One, damn it all!

OTTO. (*Crosses L. Pointing out: L. U. E.*) Then

go and marry der only von you haf any right to.

JACK. Oh, Fluff! (*Takes OTTO by his lapels and sits him on settee L.*) Now, be quiet and let me talk sense for a minute. My being a genius is the only thing that makes Josephine want me; if I could try and win Nell. Very well, it is perfectly plain then that I must cease to be a genius —

BRIAN. (R. C.) But our agreement.

VICTOR. (R) Ze promise not to betray us.

JACK. (C) That's the point. You must release me from that promise; the only way that this mess can be cleared up, is for me to denounce myself as an imposter.

VICTOR. (*Sits on settee R.*) But, mon Dieu! It will ruin everything.

JACK. I can't help it; I won't marry any one but Nell — unless I'm carried to church on a stretcher!

OTTO. If you denounce yourself as an imposter, you may be —

BRIAN. Sure, we'll get a good laugh out of it, anyway, and if Jack really wants to marry Nell — why, (*Looking JACK up and down*) she might do worse.

OTTO. I suppose you know vat you are doing?

JACK. Sure! I'm throwing off my old man of the sea; I'm getting out of Art — Josephine will hate me, and I'll be plain Jack Spencer once more.

OTTO. But vat can ve tell der public?

JACK. Tell them the truth.

VICTOR. Mon Dieu! It is not professoinal etiquette.

BRIAN. Well, if your mind's made up, I guess we don't want to hold you — and we're rich men

now.

OTTO. Sure, if you want to tell der public vat a liar ve are — go ahead!

VICTOR. (*On settee R.*) Eet vill be our revenge on Clutterbuck.

JACK. Poor Percy! These last few weeks have given me a fellow feeling for him.

OTTO. (L) Now listen; ve vill agree to let you denounce yourself on two conditions.

JACK. (C) Anything you want — what are they?

OTTO. (*Rising c. to JACK. All rise*) First, you must not speak of love to Nell till you are free.

JACK. Well, of course not.

OTTO. And second, you must let us break der news to Mr. Clutterbuck, and tell him vat is going to happen afterwards.

JACK. Afterwards — what do you mean?

VICTOR. (*Crosses R. c. to JACK*) My friend, you are a brave man; not many men would risk telling ze American people zat he had made a fool of zem.

JACK. Ah, but I won't put it that way.

BRIAN. (R) That's the way they'll take it, sure, they'll be like wild animals.

OTTO. Don't you remember vat happened to der false pretender in Russia?

JACK. No. Did something happen to him?

OTTO. Dose he had deceived first killed him, und den threw him down to an awful fate at der hands of der waiting populace.

JACK. (*Faintly*) Perhaps I'd better treat the whole matter as a joke.

BRIAN. If ye can, by all means. Come on, boys,

my tongue is swellin' with the things it wants to say to Clutterbuck; (*They go up* L. U. E.)

VICTOR. (*Embracing JACK and then taking his hand*) Adieu, my friend, we will often think of you. (*To others*)

JACK. Don't say it like that; I haven't struck the morgue yet. (VICTOR *shakes his head sorrowfully.* *To OTTO*) I'll give you ten minutes with Clutterbuck, and then —

OTTO. Und den — der avalanche! Now, (*Rising for door* L. 3.) vere is dot Clutterbuck? (*The murmur of crowd heard off R.. They go off* L. U. E. JACK *goes softly over the R. arch and peeps through, shakes his head, then slowly feels his arms, assuming boxing attitude and makes a few feinting and sidesteppings.* *Exit* R. 2. E. NELL *with written letter enters* L. 2. E. *calling*)

NELL. Jack, Jack! Fancy my calling him Jack, and yet why shouldn't I, we have known each other over three weeks. (*Dress business. Business with letter*) "Nell dear — Don't forget tonight's the night! Come around early and see the animals feed. Clutterbuck has had his evening clothes varnished, and has promised to make all these Art critics look like thirty cents. Many of the four hundred will be on hand, also some ladies of the Old Guard, with fur hats and tin skirts, it certainly looks alluring.

I hope the new gown fits, my typewriter put it on for me yesterday, and I dictated letters to absent friends as she strolled about the office.

I sent her home with a bottle of Omega Oil at 6 P. M. Do come! it's an eternity until we meet — Thine, — Jack."

JACK. (R. c.) Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to speak to you on behalf of my confreres, etc. (*Without seeing who it is. Recognizing her*) Why, Nell — I beg your pardon.

NELL. (c) What on earth are you doing?

JACK. Just rehearsing for a speech I've got to make, but I didn't expect to see you here —

NELL. I came to see the boys' work. What (*Crosses down L. to settee*) are you going to speak on?

JACK. I'm going to show the white feather; the boys have released me from my promise, and I'm just going to quit the game.

NELL. You're going to tell the public that you're a — what shall I call it?

JACK. Don't let's call it anything.

NELL. They won't be so considerate — (*Sits*)

JACK. (*Crosses to settee L. sits beside NELL*) Anyhow, I'm going to do it, because it's the only way that leads to — (*Stops embarrassed*)

NELL. To honor?

JACK. We'll call it honor for the present. But Nell, I can tell you this much; for the last week I've done nothing but miss the good old times —

NELL. Of two weeks ago?

JACK. You can laugh at me, Nell, but my whole life consists of the two weeks when you came to the studio. Ever since you left it, the place has been gloomy. Nobody's kept his temper and — well, the meaning has just gone out of life — that's all.

NELL. (*Rises and crosses R. c.*) Come, we mustn't talk like that, it's against the rules. We must just let bygones be bygones, and be good

friends when we meet.

JACK. (*Rises to 2. c.*) It seems to be easy for you Nell — but — well — Let's wait and see what happens when I tell the world I'm only a fake.

NELL. I'm afraid they won't like it.

JACK. That's what the boys said, but I've got to go through with it — or die a single impostor. (*Enter OTTO L. U. E. He has his handkerchief in his mouth; rushes across, sinks on divan c. and removing his handkerchief bursts into a roar of laughter. NELL R. of settee. JACK L. of it*)

OTTO. Ach Gott! Ach Gott! — Oh! (*Laughs*)

JACK. I'd give fifty dollars to be able to laugh like that.

NELL. Don't keep it all to yourself. What is it?

OTTO. Ach, dose boys, dose boys! I couldn't stand it; I had to leave.

JACK. Had to leave what? — you idiot.

OTTO. Victor und Brian. They are telling Clutterbuck vat der people vill do to him ven you denounce yourself. Der poor chap is half crazy.

NELL. It's a shame to scare him so.

JACK. Do you mind pointing out to me just where the humor comes in?

OTTO. If you could have seen his face — talk about imagination — dose boys worked on his feelings until he believes dat you und he vill be lynched. Oh, it vas so funny — (*Laughs. JACK sitting and rising business*)

JACK. (*L. Trying to laugh*) Yes, that would be quite a good joke on both of us, wouldn't it?

OTTO. (*Up L.*) Dey are coming in here — Come, Nell, you must see der sport. (*Taking her L. to JACK*) Ve vill come back und be in at der death.

NELL. (*Coming over and offering her hand*)
In case I don't see you again till it's all over, I wish you good luck.

JACK. Thank you, Nell — I do, too.

OTTO. (L) Now, be careful, Jack. Don't do anything in a hurry —

JACK. (*Up R.*) Oh, I'm tired of being careful. (*Murmur*) I don't care if the whole place blows up. I'm going to tell the truth and take the consequences. Oh, Lord! Here comes the crowd. (*Darts out R. 2. OTTO and NELL off L. The crowd begins to fill up the stage*)

MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE. (*Entering with CYRUS L.*) Yes, I give my little Artistic Teas every other Wednesday. I would be delighted to have you and Mrs. Jenkins drop in.

CYRUS. (*Down to c. then crosses to R. c.*) Thanks, we'd be tickled to death. I'm not much of an artist myself. (*OTTO and NELL enter L. followed by BRIAN and VICTOR. OTTO, BRIAN and VICTOR smothering laughter. BRIAN L. c.*)

MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE. Oh, since you secured your Spencer, the papers allude to you as "The well-known Patron of Fine Arts." (*They talk aside, OTTO, NELL, BRIAN and VICTOR on and down L.*)

LILLY. (*Enter R. crosses to c. below ottoman. With CYRIL R. c.*) And he looked at me with his beautiful brown eyes and said, "To the artist nothing is bold." Oh, it was so sweet, I just wanted to cry.

CYRIL. (*To BRIAN*) But where is the master?

BRIAN. One moment! Oh, he'll be here. I think he's going to give us a little talk on Art.

(*Crowd exclaims with delight. PERCY rushes on wildly L. U. E.*)

PERCY. Spencer, where is Spencer? — Ah —
(*Meets JACK C. who enters R. U. E. and seizes him*)
Spencer —

JACK. (*Putting him off*) Not now, Clutterbuck, I've got a speech to make.

PERCY. No — you must hear me! What is this foolish story your pupils have been telling me? (*Others have stopped with a sort of hushed awe as JACK entered. They now talk in whispers among themselves. PERCY and JACK down R.*)

JACK. You mean about my being a swindle?

PERCY. (R. C.) Yes, yes!

JACK. (C) That's not foolish; it's the sober truth.

PERCY. (*Noticing the crowd*) Hush! They'll hear you!

JACK. I'm going to tell them in a minute —

PERCY. No, no, you mustn't. We'll pretend to be talking about that picture. (*Points to picture L. and gesticulates. The crowd watches every movement*) Don't you see, it will prevent your winning Josephine?

JACK. (*Looking righteous*) I will not win her — by fraud.

PERCY. But it will prevent my winning her, too.

JACK. How so?

PERCY. I have called you the genius of the country; my artistic reputation is at stake. If you go — I go.

JACK. Well, I'm sorry, old man, but I don't really see what I can do.

PERCY. Spencer, you haven't the heart to ruin

me in cold blood!

JACK. My dear boy, I didn't tell you the work was great — you told me. (*PERCY makes a gesture of despair and crosses R.*) Besides, you can tell them you were mistaken, that, upon reflection, you don't think the work is as good after all. We all make mistakes. (*Crosses L. near piano*)

PERCY. (*Quickly to L.*) But, you don't understand. A critic is not allowed to make a mistake. What he says, he has to stick to.

JACK. Oh, you can find some way out of it; the people will find out anyhow, that I'm only an ordinary sort of man. (*He, by accident, sits on piano and makes a discord. Immediately the buzz of the crowd stops, and everyone listens intently, with an expression of complete happiness*)

MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE (*To MRS. VAN DUSEN*) What a wonderful dissonance!

CYRIL. (*To LILLY*) He's explaining a point in harmony.

JOSEPHINE. (*To herself*) He has reached the soul of music! (*All talk*)

PERCY. (*To JACK. Movement toward c.*) There, you see — look at that crowd! Do you realize the adulation, the position you are giving up?

JACK. (*Toward c.*) You just bet I do! I haven't made an honest movement for three weeks, but it's got to stop. I'm going to get my ammunition and then the fun will begin. I'm sorry for you, Clutterbuck, but I've got a duty to perform, and when I think of these last three weeks, the devil and all his angels shan't stop me. (*Rushes off L. I. E.*)

OTTO. (*Coming over in front of settee L. to PERCY*) Vell, haf you convinced him?

PERCY. (R. C.) He won't listen to reason; he's determined to ruin us all.

OTTO. (c) But you should haf some influence over him, you who haf guided his genius from childhood, who tenderly trained his budding talents und den revealed dem to der admiring populace?

PERCY. Stop! Stop! You'll drive me mad!

OTTO. Dot would be a pity! Der world cannot afford to lose such a skillful critic! (*Crosses to L. of settee L. VICTOR L. Enter JACK with large, flat parcel. PERCY rushes to him*)

BRIAN. The Artistic Columbus of America.

PERCY. (*Wringing his hands*) My reputation—

JACK. I can't help it! I have a duty to perform. (*PERCY down R. JACK crosses L. in front of settee, then turn speak to OTTO*) Say, Otto, hold 'em back all you can, I'm going to begin.

OTTO. Vell, I'll do vot I can, but be careful. (*Joins VICTOR, BRIAN and NELL. PERCY sinks in despair on bench R. JACK crosses to L. and turns to address the crowd*)

JACK. Ladies and Gentlemen — (*At the first words the crowd is absolutely silent*) I — I have an important announcement to make — (*The crowd does not move*) There have been so many nice things said about my — about the work you see around you, that it is only fair that you should know — that — I — that is — (*Coughs*) I say that it is only just — that I should tell you — that — I — didn't do it; in fact, I'm not a genius at all — and never painted a picture in my life — (*A murmur from the crowd; they begin talking*)

excitedly) I want to apologize for appearing to deceive you, but, in short, I'm glad you like the work of my three friends.

OTTO. By tam! He's done it now —

MRS. VAN DUSEN. What does he say?

MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE. He is not a genius?

CYRUS. Absurd!

CYRIL. His three friends!

MISS TREVOR. Nonsense ——— etc.

PERCY. (R) No, no, listen to me.

CROWD. (*Turning to PERCY*) You told us he was a genius. We have your word for it; what have you to say? etc.

PERCY. (*Standing on settee R.*) Yes, I told you he was a genius, and I've made a mistake.

CROWD. No, no. What — mistake — no.

PERCY. Then I maintain that he is a genius. The very speech he is making proves it. Since you force me, I will tell you what is the matter. My poor friend has been thinking over his new picture of "The Creation" until the depth of his thoughts has unhinged his mind! (*The crowd amazed, talk excitedly, putting their hands to their heads, etc.*)

JACK. (*Mounting settee L.*) No, that is not true; I am as sane as you are, but I am not a genius. I am an imposter; I don't know anything about Art! I don't know the difference between a water color and an aqua marine!

PERCY. You see, his modesty has taken an acute form.

CROWD. Yes, yes — that's it!

JACK. Don't listen to him; I ought to know whether I am a genius or not. I didn't paint one of those pictures ———

CROWD. Your name is on them — you signed them.

JACK. Yes. I am a liar — a thief — a stealer of reputation, an unprincipled scoundrel, but not a genius!

PERCY. You see he is raving mad —

CROWD. Yes, yes, poor fellow, so young, etc.

JACK. (*Becoming wild*) But, I tell you, I'm not mad. Great Scott! Don't you know the difference between a mad man and a damn fool? (*LILLY glistens*) Confound it all — I tell you the plain truth for the first time in weeks, and nobody believes me. What's the matter with you people?

CYRUS. Oh, he's getting violent —

CYRIL. Send for an ambulance.

JACK. I never saw such a pack of idiots in my life. If you won't believe me, look here — (*Hastily taking parcel and unwrapping head he drew in Act II*) Maybe this will convince you — (*Showing it to them*) there, this is a specimen of my best work; I never did in my life anything better than that. If that's what you call Art, I'm the greatest artist that ever lived.

PERCY. (*With a shriek of joy crosses L. c.*) Ah, he admits it! The master's own hand betrays him; don't you see this could never be done by anyone but a genius? Look at the wonderful motion, the bold, yet suggestive treatment! The depth of meaning in every line; it has all the fine points of a Millet with the originality of a Spencer!

CROWD. Yes, yes, we see — wonderful! Superb!

JACK. (*Throwing picture away, rushes to settee c., and leaps on it*) You thick headed flock of sheep, don't you see he's talking Tommy rot? He's

making fools of you. I don't know what a Millet is, but if I've got it I didn't mean to. I'm giving you the sober truth. Why, up to three weeks ago, I never saw the inside of a studio.

CROWD. No, no — Clutterbuck knows — you are mad!

JACK. No, no, I'm not mad, but damn it all, you'll make me mad in a minute, if you don't listen to me; you ought to see I'm not lying. No lie was ever so hard to tell as this.

PERCY. (*Crosses c. r.*) The frenzy is coming on; leave him with his pupils — (*The crowd begin to go out r. 2. entrance shaking their heads, saying: "Poor fellow," etc.*)

JACK. (*c. shrieking*) But I tell you I'm a fake, an ordinary, everyday, common fake, (*Turning to the three artists*) Boys, tell them I'm a fake. (R. B. BRIAN *up among crowd. The crowd turns toward OTTO*)

OTTO. Ja, he is a fake —

PERCY. (*R. who has hurried among the crowd*) That's right, humor him or it may get serious.

JACK. (*Among crowd R.*) No, don't humor me. People, people, don't leave a fellow creature branded as a genius without raising your hand to save him. I'm not fooling you, I'm a real fake.

PERCY. (*Among crowd L.*) Humor him; tell him he is a fake.

CROWD. Yes, yes, you are a real fake. (*To each other*)

CYRUS. Poor young man.

MRS. VAN BROWN-SMYTHE. So much genius.

MISS TREVOR. Abnormal, — etc. (*The crowd off, JACK expostulating with them*)

JACK. (*Getting hold of CYRIL and CYRUS*) Here, you two, don't you believe me?

CYRIL. (*Almost in tears*) Ah, master, be calm, you'll feel better tomorrow.

JACK. Oh, you ass! (*To CYRUS*) You see I'm in earnest —

CYRUS. It comes from giving up too many things; I was afraid somethin' would happen to you. (*Exit with CYRIL. By this time every one is off except NELL and the three artists. PERCY has restrained JOSEPHINE from going to JACK, and taken her off. CYRIL and CYRUS are the last to go*)

JACK. (C) Of all the concentrated, double-barrelled idiots I ever saw these people are the champions! Not one of them believes me, I wonder if, Good God! Maybe I am a genius. (*He sinks on central settee in despair. OTTO comes to him. VICTOR and BRIAN down R.*)

OTTO. Also! I always said you could not tell vat der public vould do next — (*To NELL*) Tie up dot picture. It is worth its weight in gold. (*She does so*) I congratulate you —

JACK. (*Looking at him*) Huh!

VICTOR. (*Coming forward*) We felicitate you.

JACK. I suppose you mean that there is no danger now of our ever being discovered. That I have been branded a genius, and in spite of all I can do, I will remain a genius as long as I live!

BRIAN. But, it'll be much easier than before, sure, you can do anything you want to now; your reputation is so firmly established that ye can't harm it.

JACK. (*Starting up*) But I — I (*Turning to VICTOR and BRIAN*) Boys, ask Nell to promenade

with you, I've got some things to say to Otto which are unfit for her to hear —

BRIAN. (*Up R. C.*) Come, Nell. (*NELL joins the two men, and they go out R. 3. E. leaving JACK and OTTO. JACK turns to OTTO*)

JACK. Otto, look at me — hard — (*He does so*) I'm going to ask you a question, and I want you to tell me the truth.

OTTO. Haf you not had enough of der truth for von day?

JACK. No, I must know one thing more. (*Coming down C.*)

OTTO. Vell, ask me —

JACK. Is there anything in what those people say?

OTTO. You mean about your being mad?

JACK. No, no, I mean during the last three weeks it isn't possible that I may have become a genius, without my knowing it. (*OTTO bursts into a loud laugh*)

OTTO. (*Down to settee L. — sits*) Ach Gott! — du lieber! — A Genius — Oh! (*Laughs*)

JACK. (*C*) But I might as well be — I set a trap for Josephine and I've fallen into it myself. Think of it, Otto, I'm doomed to live for Art — Art for breakfast, dinner and supper — and all the time I've got to realize that I'm nothing but a sort of Peroxide blonde — Oh, Otto, you've taught young girls music for twenty years — you ought to know something about them.

OTTO. Ja — I do —

JACK. (*Crosses R.*) Isn't there any way I can convince her that if she marries me, she ruins both our lives?

OTTO. (*Crosses c.*) Vell, dere is von scheme you haf not tried.

JACK. What is it?

OTTO. You must fight fire mit fire; you must convince her that her interests of Art demand, demand dot she gives you up.

JACK. By Jove! Otto, I never thought of that!

OTTO. Tell dot marriage and genius do not mix.

JACK. Yes, I see the idea, Otto, I believe you've struck it.

OTTO. Tell her she must be der Beatrice to your Dante.

JACK. I don't know who Beatrice was, but I'll play her across the board. Now you just get her in here and then come back in ten minutes with Nell in one hand and a bottle of carbolic acid in the other — I'll need one of the two.

OTTO. (*Up L. c. Starting up*) *All right. (Stops)* Here she comes now — looking for you —

JACK. (*R. c.*) Who, Nell?

OTTO. (*c*) No, Josephine. Und she has a hungry look in her eye.

JACK. Wait, stay here and help me create the proper atmosphere. (*Grabbing him and pulling him down R.*) Let her overhear — I'll give you the cue.

OTTO. But above all things she must think you love her madly.

JACK. Trust me. Look out, here she is! (*He changes his manner as JOSEPHINE enters L. U. E., and pauses on seeing the two men talking. They pretend not to see her. Wildly, sinking on settee*) No, no, Otto, I cannot give her up—

OTTO. (*Above settee*) Oh, master, think of

your Art.

JACK. Art! What is art to me compared to Josephine?

OTTO. (JOSEPHINE *up* L. C.) Art is everything to you, you do not belong to yourself, but to der world.

JACK. (OTTO *to* L. *of settee*) But, Josephine — (*Rises, hand on OTTO's shoulder*) Ah, Otto, you do not know what you ask.

OTTO. Master, you know in your heart dot you must give her up.

JACK. (*Turning R.*) No — no —

OTTO. If you do not tell her so — (*As though to go up L.*) I vill!

JACK. (R) What! You would tell that sensitive soul that our marriage cannot take place? No! Sooner than have her hear one word of this — I would kill myself! (*Facing front*)

OTTO. (*Majestically*) And your Art? (*Aside to him*) Go ahead, be convinced now.

JACK. (*Sorrowfully*) True, true. But oh, I wish I could spare her the pain of it. (*Sinking on settee*)

OTTO. If she is your real inspiration, she vill be der first to tell you dot your life must be given to your vork.

JACK. (*Springing to his feet — alarmed*) And can I never marry?

OTTO. (*Up c.*) Yes — but not your inspiration!

JACK. Yes, yes, you are right, but oh, how can I tell her — It would — (*Turns and pretends to see JOSEPHINE for the first time*) Great Heavens!— Josephine —

JOSEPHINE. (*Coming down L. c.*) I have

heard —

JACK. (*Turning away — in a voice broken with grief*) You — have heard.

JOSEPHINE. Everything!

JACK. (*Waving OTTO away*) Otto, leave us.
(*OTTO silently exits R. U. E.*)

JOSEPHINE. (c) Is it true? Must I give you up?

JACK. It is for you to say. You can be my wife — or my inspiration.

JOSEPHINE. Why can I not be both?

JACK. Because I am a genius, and as soon as a genius marries his inspiration — it stops inspiring!
(*Turns away*)

GAL—25

JOSEPHINE. Is that true?

JACK. It is more than true — it is artistic.
(*Down R.*) You must be the Beatrice to my Dante. If you marry me, the romance will go out like a candle. (*Crosses to c.*) Oh, don't you see that a genius, because he is a genius, must marry a woman and not an artist? He must have someone to cook, and darn his socks.

JOSEPHINE. Oh, don't — (*Crosses L. c.*)

JACK. (c) I am cruel only to be kind. It means even more to me than to you. But you can imagine the effect of a genius seeing his inspiration in curl-papers —

JOSEPHINE. Yes, you are right. I never thought of that before. Why, marriage is the worst thing that can happen to Art.

JACK. (c) I give you my word, Josephine, that if you marry me, you will find my Art will soon die. If you wish to believe in my genius, you must not see me after Tuesday.

JOSEPHINE. No?

JACK. (*Gently*) It is for you to choose, Josephine. But if Art is the biggest thing in your life, you must give me up —

JOSEPHINE. (*Facing front enraptured*) Then, I could make my life a sacrifice to Art.

JACK. You have a chance to be a sort of Joan of Art.

JOSEPHINE. (*c. With growing inspiration*) Yes, yes. I will do it. (*Taking JACK's hands*) Oh, thank you, my friend, for showing me the true way —

JACK. There is one more thing — Percy —

JOSEPHINE. Ah, don't speak of him now.

JACK. Yes, for this is the last time I may ever talk to you. He loves you, Josephine. Your souls are congenial, and it would make me happy to know that you returned his love —

JOSEPHINE. It would make the sacrifice complete.

JACK. Yes —

JOSEPHINE. Then I will marry him — (*Enter OTTO and NELL — stand at back*)

JACK. (*Taking her hand*) Thank you — Good lady, and now farewell. (*Dropping her hands — crosses L.*)

JOSEPHINE. Do not grieve, believe me, we will both be happier.

JACK. (*PERCY enters. Crosses down to R. C.*) I am sure of it. (*JOSEPHINE crosses to PERCY R. U. E.*) Percy, take her, my boy, make her happy — 23.

PERCY. Josephine, what is the matter?

JOSEPHINE. (*To him — starting off R.*) Come — my engagement is broken.

PERCY. Then I want to tell you that for years

I have — (*They exit R. U. E.*)

JACK. (*Following them to R. C.*) Phew! Otto, if I ever in my life tell another lie — (*OTTO and NELL come down*)

OTTO. Vell vot has happened?

JACK. (*R. C.*) Josephine has chosen Art and Percy, and thrown me over. I'm going to retire permanently and let you pupils carry on the work.

NELL. (*L. C.*) As pupils of Spencer, your future is assured —

JACK. Yes, but I want to talk about my own future.

OTTO. (*C*) Vell, in der first place —

JACK. Otto, if you're looking for the ice-water — you'll find it in the front room — (*Music cue ready*)

OTTO. Ice-water?

JACK. Yes — out that way — (*Points out R. U. E.*)

OTTO. (*Taking the hint*) Oh, excuse me. (*Exits L. U. E.*)

JACK. (*Taking NELL's hand as she starts to move away*) Nell, I told you I'd lose no time the minute I was free. Come, let's go somewhere and forget that Art exists. There's a real world out there, full of real men and women, and real happiness and sorrow. Let's go and live in it and be real people. Life is calling to us, Nell, will you come? Will you?

NELL. Will I what?

JACK. Oh, you know — go on —

NELL. (*Turning to him*) Yes — Yes. (*JACK takes her in his arms. The three artists come on at*

back. They see JACK and NELL, and turn their backs, pretending to discuss the pictures)

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